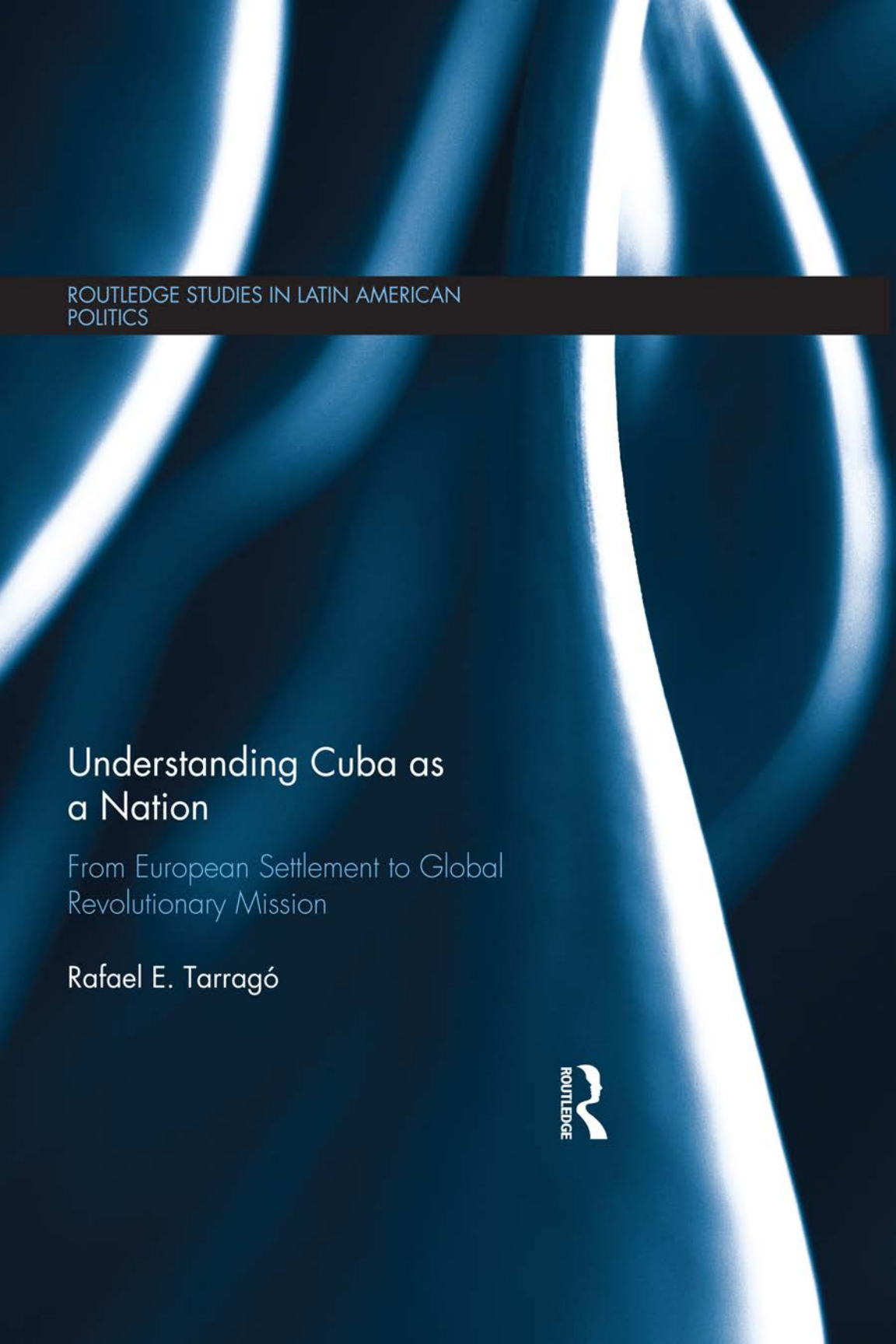
ROUTLEDGE STUDIES IN LATIN AMERICAN POLITICS
Understanding Cuba as a Nation
From European Settlement to Global Revolutionary Mission
Rafael E. Tarragó
ROUTLEDGE

A synthetic history of cuba full of suggestions that invite the reader to learn more.

Luis Miguel García Mora, *Fundación Mapfre*

Cuba continues to engage the imagination of North American and European readers as few other Latin American countries. From the native Taínos to Raúl Castro, *Understanding Cuba* as a Nation covers historical developments in the Island with unusual attention to cultural achievements, economics, and politics. Tarragó offers a narrative that is both accessible to lay readers and rich in historical detail, debunking in the process many ideological preconceptions and historical myths.

Aníbal Pérez-Liñán, *University of Pittsburgh.*
Editor, Latin American Research Review

Understanding Cuba as a Nation

Since 1959, the government of the Caribbean island of Cuba, 90 miles away from the United States of America, has defied its powerful neighbor. The story of the improbable survival of the Cuban Revolutionary Government in its struggle against the most powerful country in the world has kept international attention on Cuba for more than half a century; but it has also overshadowed the brilliance of the hybrid culture developed in the island since the Spanish conquerors brought Western civilization to the Americas 500 years ago.

Rafael E. Tarragó pays due attention to the first 400 years after the arrival of the Spaniards in the island, showing that a Cuban nation had developed from the European and African settlers with the indigenous population before the creation of the Cuban Republic in 1902. He describes the accomplishments and failures of that Republic that made possible the rise of the Cuban Revolutionary Government. He concludes with a look at accomplishments and the shortcomings of that self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninist government; its troubled relation with the United States; and the global revolutionary mission that it has embraced since its inception.

Understanding Cuba as a Nation is a detailed yet accessibly written exploration of the history of Cuba since the Spanish conquest of 1511 that illustrates the development of the Cuban nation, and summarizes the accomplishments of Cubans since the sixteenth century in the arts, literature, and science.

Rafael E. Tarragó is Librarian for Iberian, Ibero-American & Chicano/Latino Studies at the University of Minnesota Libraries. His research interests include Cuban and Spanish American history and culture.

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Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
NEW YORK AND LONDON

First published 2017
by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

and by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Names: Tarragó, Rafael E. (Rafael Emilio), 1951– author.
Title: Understanding Cuba as a nation: from European settlement to global revolutionary mission / Rafael E. Tarragó.
Description: New York : Routledge, [2017] | Series: Routledge studies in Latin American politics; 18 | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2016037489 | ISBN 9781138215122 (hbk)
Subjects: LCSH: Cuba–History.
Classification: LCC F1776 .T37 2017 | DDC 972.91–dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2016037489

ISBN: 978-1-138-21512-2 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-315-44448-2 (ebk)

Typeset in Times New Roman
by Wesrset Ltd, Boldon, Tyne and Wear

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Acknowledgments

I owe thanks to all those who made this work possible: editors, readers, and the staff in the Inter-Library Loans department at the University of Minnesota Libraries. But I want to acknowledge specially the comments and suggestions made by Philippe Coueignoux, Stanley T. Grip Jr., Dr. Aníbal Pérez-Liñán, and Dr. Carla R. Phillips, and the technical assistance of George Swan.

Figure 0.1 Administrative Divisions of Cuba.

Source: Map published by the Central Intelligence Agency in 1986.

Introduction

In the months following the December 17, 2014 declarations by US President Barack Obama offering an end to the hostile stance of his country toward Cuba, the Cuban Revolutionary Government demanded many politically impossible conditions as prerequisite to a renewal of diplomatic relations between the two countries, making some observers wonder why Cuba did not accept without reservations the opening offered by its powerful neighbor after being hostile for five decades. These observers would have found an answer to their question by reflecting on the history of the people of Cuba since 1511: a settlement established there by a group of Spaniards in that year and become an European-style nation with one of the largest economies in Latin America where, 350 years later, in 1959, a critical majority following the leadership of Dr. Fidel Castro Ruz rejected the market economy that had made their island nation wealthy, and embarked on a global revolutionary mission.

Since 1959, the government of the Caribbean island of Cuba, 90 miles away from the United States of America, has defied its powerful neighbor. The story of the improbable survival of the Cuban Revolutionary Government in its struggle against the most powerful country in the world has kept international attention on Cuba for more than half a century; but it has also overshadowed the brilliance of the hybrid culture developed in the island since the Spanish conquerors brought Western civilization to the Americas 500 years ago, and obscured the accomplishments of Cubans in the sciences, arts and letters before and after 1959. Icons of the Cuban Revolution of 1959 are recognized worldwide, but unfortunately there is not an equal awareness about Cuban contributors to world knowledge in natural history during the Enlightenment; appreciation of the influence of Cuban poets José María Heredia, Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, and Julián del Casal in Spanish and Spanish American literature in the nineteenth century; or knowledge of the fact that a Cuban, Carlos J. Finlay, discovered that the mosquito was the transmission vector of yellow fever. Someone who does not know those names and what they represent in Cuban cultural history can hardly claim to know it.

This book acknowledges the indigenous civilization existing in Cuba in 1511 at the time of its conquest by Spaniards led by Sir Diego Velázquez, and stresses pervading indigenous features in Cuban material culture, and the Spanish spoken in Cuba. Also it acknowledges the voluntary immigration of Europeans, and the

mostly forced arrival of Africans since that time. In the course of 500 years these circumstances formed the present characteristics of the Cuban population. It was the Spanish conquerors and their Cuban descendants that developed the commercial growth of tobacco and sugar cane as cash crops and of the manufactures based on them that formed the underpinnings of what was once one of the wealthiest economies of the Americas, a circumstance which, in turn, developed a solid Western-style culture in this Caribbean island. But those activities depended on the forced labor of thousands of African slaves and their Cuban descendants. The first two chapters of this book highlight how a Western-style culture had taken root in Cuba by the end of the eighteenth century; describe the flourishing in Cuba of the arts, sciences, and letters in the eighteenth century and in the nineteenth century; and present the formation of a civil society there fueled by an export economy dominated by sugar production in the nineteenth century. The names of prominent Cuban poets, artists, musicians and scientists mentioned in these chapters are important to this purpose, because they document the fact that in early modern Cuba there were Cuban producers of that type of culture, and that Cubans were not mere consumers of cultural products from outside. Visitors to Cuba who see churches like the cathedral in Santiago and academic institutions like the Economic Society in Havana (now the Instituto Fernando Ortiz) will appreciate their significance better if they know about composers like Esteban Salas, who composed music for the former between 1775 and 1804, and authors like José María Heredia, whose poems were first published in *Revista Bimestre Cubana*, published by the latter.

In contrast to the many analyses that look at Cuba as a mere passive victim of imperialism, this volume looks at Cuban agency that between 1878 and 1898 was influential in bringing down not only slavery, but also the system of legal racial discrimination that had been erected in Cuba from 1511 to 1868, and in 1898 saw the implementation of universal male suffrage together with home rule under the Cuban Autonomous Government. We will examine the accomplishments as well as the problems of the Republic of Cuba (granted formal independence in 1902 by the United States after it wrested the island from Spain in 1898). Although it came into being with restricted independence, some of its leaders brought about important economic and social reforms that created sociopolitical and economic contradictions that fostered the rise of the Cuban Revolutionary Government. Finally, we will look at the accomplishments and the shortcomings of that self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninist government; its troubled relation with the United States; and the global revolutionary mission that it has embraced since its inception. Cuba cannot be ignored by the United States, located as it is on the Caribbean south of Florida, between the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. Its size is 42,800 square miles, and its total population is over 11 million people, with a 95 percent literacy rate.

This work is based on secondary and primary sources, and on knowledge acquired by the author during many years of research. Unlike most books about Cuba, it pays due attention to the first 400 years after the arrival of the Spaniards to the island, showing that a Cuban nation had developed from the European and African settlers with the indigenous population before the creation of the Cuban

Republic in 1902. It describes the accomplishments and failures of that Republic that made possible the rise of the Cuban Revolutionary Government. The legacy of a people is its culture, and the Spanish-American culture of Cuba can be appreciated in the works of poets like the pioneer of Romanticism in Hispanic letters, José María Heredia; musicians like the popular-classic composer Ernesto Lecuona, and painters like the world renowned Wifredo Lam.

If there is a theme to this analysis of Cuban history and culture, it is that since the sixteenth century, Cubans have accomplished more than what many would expect from people in an island away from the centers of world power, and that since the middle of the eighteenth century Cubans have striven to make a mark at what they have undertaken: whether it might be the development of a wealthy sugar export economy or that of a Marxist-Leninist state. If there is something that this book does not want to be, it is teleological. In the course of Cuban history one can see many paths taken, and unexpected ways succeeding. Because this is a very short volume, I suggest to the reader in whom it may spark an interest in knowing more about Cuba to read one of two general histories of Cuba: the single volume Hugh Thomas's *Cuba or The Pursuit of Freedom* (updated edition: New York, 1998), or the multi-volume *Historia de la Nación Cubana*, edited by Ramiro Guerra Sánchez at Havana in 1957, but still the most balanced history of Cuba from 1511–1950. Also, I suggest that readers consult the bibliography of specialized books in English at the end of this book for further reading on specific topics in Cuban history that they want to explore.

Figure 1.1 View of Santiago de Cuba.
Source: Photograph by Andrea Brizzi.

1 The Making of a Hybrid Culture
Cuba, 1511–1824

The Tainos

Although Christopher Columbus landed in Cuba on October 28, 1492, during his first voyage to what became known as the New World, and took possession of it in the name of the monarchs of Castile, the Spanish conquest and settlement of the island took place 19 years later. In February 1511, the Spanish knight Diego Velázquez, in the service of Don Diego Columbus, governor of Hispaniola (the island now shared by present-day Haiti and the Dominican Republic), landed in eastern Cuba with 300 followers. Once in Cuba, Velázquez formally withdrew his allegiance from Diego Columbus, and he and his men drafted and signed a document stating that they would conquer the island for the King of Castile, Charles I of Habsburg (r. 1516–1556), who later became known as the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. Thus, Velázquez and his followers established a covenant directly between the Spanish Crown, and themselves and their descendants called an *Acta de Capitulación*. Between 1511 and 1515, they conquered Cuba from east to west, and founded seven towns: Nuestra Señora de la Asunción de Baracoa, Santiago de Cuba, San Salvador de Bayamo, Puerto Príncipe (present-day Camagüey), Sancti Spiritus, Trinidad, and San Cristóbal de La Habana.[1]

Although the Spanish conquest of Cuba changed life on the island drastically, it did not take place in an empty land, and it was not unopposed. Even under external European colonization the early indigenes were contributors to the culture.[2] Before the arrival of the Spaniards, Cuba was populated by several American peoples, the immediate arrival before them being the Tainos, who had also established settlements in the other large islands of the Caribbean: Jamaica, Hispaniola (Haiti), and Puerto Rico (Borinquen).[3] Soon after the arrival of Sir Diego Velázquez and his followers in Cuba, they were opposed by armed Tainos led by *the cacique* (chieftain) Hatuey, whose heroic death at the stake has become widely known through the writings of the Spanish missionary Father Bartolomé de las Casas (1484–1560).[4] When the Spanish conquerors reached the western part of Cuba they encountered two Spanish women and a Spanish boy who had been captured by the Tainos after their ship had become wrecked off the northern coast of the island. Because the Tainos had killed all the other survivors of that Spanish shipwreck, the Spaniards under Diego Velázquez called the bay where that massacre took place Bahía de Matanzas (Massacre Bay).[5]

Eventually the Tainos were subdued, and a pseudo feudal system was established in Cuba under Spanish royal authority which required Indian settlements to provide labor for the plantations of prominent Spaniards (called *encomenderos*, because they were supposed to be protectors of the Indians who were *encomendados* to them, that is, placed under their "charge"), and projects that were deemed essential for the royal government, such as mining. These forced labor arrangements resembled the European systems of serfdom and corvee, but Taino society had never experienced anything like them. Living in settlements with Europeans had disastrous effects on the native population when it caught European illnesses such as measless and smallpox. Father de las Casas tells in his *Historia de las Indias* how many Tainos in Cuba lost the desire to live under subjection, and killed their families and themselves by hanging.[6]

It was while observing the destitution and despair of the Tainos in Cuba in 1514 that Father Bartolomé de las Casas experienced the spiritual crisis that made him change his life: from a secular priest with Indians assigned to him in *encomienda* to become the "defender of the Indians" whom we recognize in colonial Latin American history.[7] From the very beginnings of the Spanish settlement of Cuba there were missionaries in the island protesting against the reduction to serfdom of the native population. The missionaries argued that if the American Indians were rational beings, they could not with justice be deprived of their lands and made to work or pay tribute. King Ferdinand the Catholic and his successor Charles I listened to them, and there were in Spain public debates about the rationality of the Indians and about their capacity to live in freedom like Christian Spaniards. The rationality of the Indians and their capacity to become Christians was acknowledged by Pope Paul III in the bull *Sublimis Deus*, issued on June 9, 1537, in terms that made it difficult for Catholic Spaniards to challenge it.[8] But debates about the freedom of the Indians continued, because "living like Christian Spaniards" was defined by the Spaniards for the Indians as laboring and paying tribute, and most Spaniards argued that if allowed to run free the Indians would live in idleness, nakedness, and improvidence. Except for the missionaries and some Spanish Crown officials, the general opinion of the European settlers was that it was better for the Indians to become enslaved men than to remain "free beasts."[9]

It is a commonplace in Cuban history to say that the Spaniards killed all the Indians, and it is undeniable that hundreds of native Cubans died fighting in skirmishes with the better-armed Spanish conquerors. Still more natives died of overwork after the latter imposed serfdom and corvee on them, and many died from undernourishment, disease, and despair. According to the *Handbook of South American Indians*, the indigenous population of Cuba at the time of the arrival of the Spaniards on the island has been variously estimated from 16,000 to 60,000.[10] By 1555, it had descended to 5,000, but, despite this dramatic decrease of the indigenous population, there were Indian rebellions in Cuba until the *encomienda* was abolished in 1555, and there were *pueblos de indios* (Indian towns) in Cuba, such as El Caney, as late as the nineteenth century.[11] The presence of the native Cuban population has been easy to ignore since 1697, when King Charles II (r. 1661–1700) passed a decree reasserting that native Americans

in his domains were to be treated as *españoles* (whites, in the context of Spanish colonial legislation), and their *caciques* (chieftains) as *hidalgos de Castilla* (Spanish gentry), because after that year Cuban parishes ceased to enter baptisms of Indians and *mestizos* in separate registers for Indians.[12] It may be surmised that such births were recorded in the registers for *españoles* or for blacks.

In his book *Tainos*, Irving Rouse argues that the pre-Hispanic Cuban population did not disappear but became assimilated.[13] Hugh Thomas, in an appendix to his book *Cuba or The Pursuit of Freedom*, argues that descendants of the Tainos lived in Cuba in the twentieth century.[14] The theory of the extermination of the Tainos in Cuba by the Spaniards is no longer universally accepted. In December 1996, a gathering of Taino descendant Cubans and Puerto Ricans took place at Baracoa, in eastern Cuba.[15] Be that as it may, it is an uncontested fact that by the end of the eighteenth century Taino words, food, domestic structures, and customs had been adopted by the Spaniards and the Cuban descendants of the Spanish conquerors in Cuba, who were more likely than not carriers of Taino DNA. Taino words in Cuban Spanish include *cacique* (originally native chieftain, now colloquially boss), *hamaca* (hammock), *guajiro* (originally lord, today person from the countryside), and *batey* (square in sugar mill towns). Today Cubans eat fried *yuca* (cassava) with their main course for dinner and have *mamey* for dessert. The Cuban countryside is still dotted with palm bark huts with roofs made of palm leaves called *bohíos*. The Spaniards in Cuba were the first Europeans who learned to roll the leaves of the American plant that the Tainos called *Tabaco*, to burn them, and to inhale their smoke as their American Indian hosts taught them.

The Africans

Africans arrived in Cuba after the Spaniards. Although most Africans were brought by the Spaniards and their descendants to Cuba as slaves to work in mining and in agricultural enterprises, some African freedmen and Spaniards of African ancestry went there as domestics and artisans. A few, like Juan Garrido, were active as soldiers in the conquest of the island.[16] Free black immigrants established the foundations for a thriving community of free blacks in the island's urban settlements. Black military auxiliaries were by necessity armed, and by fighting and surviving those who arrived as slaves usually earned their freedom and became conquistadors in their own right.[17]

Because during the sixteenth century and the seventeenth century the Cuban export economy was dominated by enterprises that were not labor intensive, like ranching (for the export of tallow, hides and dry meat), and agriculture in middle-sized farms where tobacco and foodstuffs were produced (Cuban tobacco was exported as a luxury item since the first decade of the eighteenth century, and Cuban foodstuffs were sold to provision the annual convoys that stopped in Cuba in their way from Panama and Veracruz, called *flotas*, since their inception in 1564), slavery was not a very important element in Cuba during those centuries. The number of Africans and descendants of Africans was not as large in Cuba in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries as it was in the Caribbean plantation

colonies of the Dutch, the English, and the French, or in northeastern Brazil.[18] Things changed in the fourth quarter of the eighteenth century, when planters from western Cuba convinced the King of Spain that sugar would make Cuba a rich colony that would be able to pay for its administration and defense, and obtained from him permission to import African slaves in large numbers—as well as the machinery and technology necessary to produce sugar on a large scale. But by that time free blacks had become an important sector of the population in Cuba, and some of them had attained wealth and social pre-eminence. During his visit to Cuba in 1800, the German scientist Alexander Baron von Humboldt noticed the size and the prosperity of the community of free blacks in the island.[19]

Despite laws not allowing anyone of African ancestry to go to the University of Havana or any other institution of higher learning, some Afro-Cubans were able to obtain waivers to those statutes of purity of blood.[20] By the end of the eighteenth century, certain professions (e.g., musician and dental surgeon) were dominated by Afro-Cubans. Many free blacks attended grammar school, and became teachers and literary writers. During the last quarter of the eighteenth century, two battalions of mulattos and one of free blacks (called *pardos* and *morenos* respectively) were formed in Cuba. The officers of these battalions were blacks and mulattos, who were granted the *fuero de guerra militar*, which permitted military officers to present their legal causes before military tribunals, a privilege that in the hierarchical colonial society where they lived conveyed distinction and prestige.[21]

The World that the Spaniards Made

Sir Diego Velázquez and his followers established settlements in Cuba that proved to be stable, and with thriving economic hinterlands like Santiago de Cuba, Bayamo, Puerto Príncipe, Sancti Spiritus, Trinidad, and Havana. The Spanish conqueror established his seat of government in Santiago de Cuba, on the southeastern coast of Cuba, but in 1545 the seat of the governor was removed to Havana, originally founded on the southern coast of the western part of the island, but by that time relocated to its present location on the northwestern coast of the island. From 1511 until the end of the sixteenth century, Spanish Cuba suffered several crises. The expedition to Mexico led by Hernán Cortés from Cuba in 1519, and other expeditions to the American mainland from the island (to Florida and to Central America), took away settlers and resources from the towns founded by Sir Diego Velázquez. The placer mining of gold (i.e., washing a mineral deposit—the "placer"—to separate out the gold) that dominated the Cuban economy during the first decade of European domination became exhausted by the 1550s. But the European settlements founded by Sir Diego Velázquez survived. The Spanish settlers who did not leave the island for the American mainland (and their Cuban descendants) turned their economic enterprise skills to ranching and small-scale agricultural operations, as well as to copper mining, sugar manufacturing, and commerce.[22]

Ranching and agriculture prospered in Cuba, and Cuban farmers and ranchers benefitted from the demand for their produce by the sailors and travelers who

descended upon Havana twice a year, when the *flota* (the military escorted fleets that from 1554 to 1724 ensured that the gold and silver tribute from Spanish American kingdoms reached their king in Spain) stopped at its harbor. On account of its position as a meeting center for the annual fleets, Cuba was not a backwater European settlement; quite the contrary. As Alejandro de la Fuente has documented in his book *Havana and the Atlantic*, the harbor at Havana was a central point for trade between Spain and Spanish America. By the end of the sixteenth century, the towns founded by the Spaniards in Cuba were prosperous enough to attract the attention of French, English, and Dutch pirates. Seamen such as Sir Michael Geare, Gilbert Giron, and Piet Heyn sailed on Cuban waters, and some of them practiced looting, raping and arson in Cuban towns. The most productive single action among that raiding activity, however, was actually of little harm to Cuban settlements, although it was a great loss to the Spanish Crown. This was Piet Heyn's capture of the Mexican silver fleet at Matanzas Bay on September 8, 1628.[23]

In the seventeenth century, Cuba was the largest exporter of hides in the Caribbean. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the income produced by the sale of Cuban tobacco had become important enough for the first Spanish king of the Bourbon dynasty, King Philip V (r. 1700–1746), to appropriate for the royal ex-checker the monopoly of tobacco exportation to Europe.[24] In the eighteenth century, Cuban merchants participated in the monopolistic export company called *Compañía de La Habana*. This company, comparable to the English East India Company, lasted from 1740 to 1790, and by the end of its existence had stock holders throughout the Spanish speaking world, from Cuba through the Caribbean coast of South America and Veracruz, to Lima in Peru, and Cadiz in Spain.[25] Much has been made by historians of Cuba about the future importance of the conquest of Havana by the English in 1762 for the economic development of the island—Hugh Thomas begins his celebrated history of the island with that event. But before the conquest of Havana by the English in 1762 (during the international war known as the Seven Years War) Cuba already had a prosperous economy.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, Cuba had thriving urban settlements in the east of the island, as well as in the area around Havana in the west. Santiago de Cuba in the easternmost region of the island was Cuba's second city, and the see of the Bishop of Cuba. As Celia María Parcero Torres says in her perceptive monograph *La pérdida de La Habana, las reformas borbónicas en Cuba*, Cuba did not need an English occupation in order to become a prosperous Spanish colony.[26] But after the English returned Havana and Manila to Spain in exchange for Florida at the end of the Seven Years War, King Charles III (r. 1756–1788) had Havana's city walls and surrounding fortifications strengthened and expanded, and made Havana's shipyard one of the largest in the Americas. Some of the Spanish ships that acted gallantly in 1805, when the French and the Spanish navies fought the English at the Battle of Trafalgar, such as the *Santísima Trinidad*, were made in Cuba.[27]

From 1522 until 1714, the Spanish Crown was at war against one or more rivals, with short periods of peace between conflicts. During the first 40 years of

that period, between 1635 and 1659, and between 1665 and 1697, it was at war against France. Conflicts in the Netherlands, an inherited domain of the Kings of Castile through Philip Habsburg, son of Mary of Burgundy, and the father of King Charles I of Castile, began in 1570, when rebellious Netherlanders formed a rebel government that they named the United Provinces of the Netherlands, whose fleets attacked Spanish domains in the Americas from 1588 until 1648. Spain was at war with England from 1588 to 1604, and then again from 1640 to 1660, and from 1700 to 1715. All those wars brought French, Dutch, and English pirates to Spanish America, and the system of annual fleets was developed mainly to ensure that shipments of American precious metals and other Spanish shipping (including that of people of Spanish ancestry born in the Americas, *criollos* and *mestizos*) reached Spain. In that context, the fleet system does not seem to have been an imposition, but a protection. It stands to reason to say that the raids of French, Dutch, and English pirates were not welcomed by the inhabitants of Cuba, although it is possible that they may have had business with foreign seafarers who approached them as smugglers. In 1674, under the reign of King Charles II, the Spanish Crown adopted in the Caribbean the same method of her rivals, by granting patents to "corsairs" in Cuba, who harassed French, Dutch, and English shipping. In 1686 Cuban "corsairs" burned the English plantations around Charleston, in North America.[28] By the eighteenth century the English in Jamaica had learned to hate them, and called them "xebecs."[29]

Although the holders of leading positions in the administration of Cuba—such as governor and lieutenant governor—were chosen in Spain, and were mostly Spanish-born, many Cuban-born whites (called "españoles" in government documents of that period) participated in the local administration as tax collectors, and as mayors and councilmen in the towns. By 1574, Cuba had a code of municipal legislation, the *Ordenanzas de Cáceres*, and by the end of the seventeenth century, it had European-style settlements and a European-style society, including institutions of higher education and the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. Cuban-born males held positions as parish priests, and Cubans were active members of the religious orders—both male and female—which were established on the island. In the eastern Cuban town of El Cobre, a hermitage housing a statue of the Virgin Mary that had been found in the sea by a slave and two Indians in 1604 (called "Our Lady of Charity"), grew during the eighteenth century into a shrine that the Bishop of Santiago de Cuba (Don Pedro Agustín Morell de Santa Cruz) called "the richest, and most frequently visited" in the island.[30] By 1800, Santiago de Cuba had been elevated to an archdiocese, and Havana had been erected as the seat of a bishop.

At the end of the eighteenth century, Cuban planters in western Cuba convinced King Charles III (whose full title was "King of Spain and Emperor of the Indies") to support their project to produce sugar on a large scale. In 1778, Cuba was the first American domain of the King of Spain to be allowed to trade with all Spanish ports, and, starting in 1818, with the whole world (although non-Spanish ships paid a high export duty).[31] Perhaps the most influential member of that group of Cubans descended from Spaniards was Francisco de Arango y Parreño, born at Havana in 1765 into a wealthy family with a tradition

of service to the Crown. He was educated at the San Carlos Seminary after studying law at the University of Havana and in Spain. From 1788 to 1794 he resided in Madrid, as legal representative of the city of Havana, and while holding that office he presented to King Charles IV (r. 1788–1808) a project for improving agricultural production in Cuba. This project was approved by Royal Decree on November 22, 1792. After his return to Cuba in 1795, Francisco de Arango y Parreño established a strong friendship with Governor Luis de las Casas (governor from 1790 to 1796), and became an active member of the Economic Society of Havana. In 1813 King Ferdinand VII (r. 1808–1833) made him a permanent member of the Council of the Indies, and as such he held influence until his death in Havana in 1837.[32]

Letters, Arts and Science in Cuba before 1800

It is generally accepted that Canary Islands-born Silvestre de Balboa wrote the epic *Espejo de paciencia* in Cuba in 1604, and that in the eighteenth century, Cuban-born descendants of Spaniards (and Spaniards residing in Cuba) wrote plays for performances on the island.[33] The printing press was introduced in Santiago de Cuba in 1699. In Havana, the printing press was introduced in 1707, and the University of Havana was founded in 1728.[34] While the University of Havana was founded primarily to train priests, lawyers and medical doctors, it also introduced to Cuba the study of Catholic theology and western philosophy. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, other institutions of higher learning came into being in Cuba: the Seminario of San Basilio Magno in Santiago de Cuba, and the Seminario de San Carlos in Havana. Also in the eighteenth century, the first book-length histories of Cuba were written, by bishop Pedro Morell de Santa Cruz, and by José Martín Félix de Arrate.[35] In 1811, the priest Félix Varela was appointed professor of philosophy at the University of Havana. Father Varela was critical of the traditional scholastic method of philosophical debate, and he taught the philosophical ideas prevalent in Europe during that period, called the Enlightenment. Under his leadership, in 1814, Latin ceased being the language of the classroom at the University of Havana.[36]

Reforms of the Spanish institution responsible for regulating medical practice, the *Protomedicado*, were influential in professionalizing the practice of medicine in Cuba by the end of the eighteenth century. In the 1780s, King Charles III issued a decree encouraging the formation of economic societies (*sociedades económicas*) in his domains, and in Cuba the Economic Society of Santiago de Cuba was founded in 1787, and the Economic Society of Havana was founded in 1791. These societies were formed by local gentry, professionals and wealthy merchants who were interested in new ideas and technologies, and in the application of useful knowledge for the economic development of their region. In Cuba, they discussed new ideas in agriculture, manufacturing derived from agricultural products, public health issues, and other themes of political economy. Pedro Valiente, a member of the Santiago Economic Society, proposed at one of its meetings the creation of workshops in Santiago to spin and weave the cotton produced in its surrounding countryside.[37] During the

nineteenth century, the Santiago Economic Society stagnated, but the one in Havana flourished, becoming influential in the development of public education, and of the scientific study of agriculture in Cuba.[38] Havana and Santiago were not the only centers of economic development and cultural enlightenment in eighteenth-century Cuba. Alexander Humboldt in his *Political Essay on the Island of Cuba* praises the prosperous economy of Trinidad and the social graces of its leading families whom he met during a visit to that city in 1800.[39]

The Economic Society of Havana assisted in public health initiatives, such as a smallpox vaccination campaign in 1804, which was motivated by the expedition carrying the vaccine sent by King Charles IV to his domains in America and Asia in November of 1803. At that time, vaccination consisted of injecting with a lancet into the skin of a human being the pus from the sores of cows infected with cow-pox, a process discovered in England in 1796 by Dr. Edward Jenner. Those vaccinated suffered a mild case of cow-pox and became immune to human smallpox. The expedition carrying the vaccine was directed by Dr. Francisco Xavier de Balmis, who preserved the vaccine fluid by administering it to 20 children—whom he took from the orphanage of La Coruña—in groups of two, from one group to another, through the Atlantic crossing. When the vaccination expedition arrived in Cuba in May 1804, the vaccine had already arrived in Cuba through a Cuban woman who had been vaccinated in Puerto Rico, where the vaccine had arrived through a woman who had been vaccinated in the Virgin Islands (then a Danish colony). Although the vaccine preceded him to Cuba, Dr. Balmis made himself useful, working with the royal authorities in Cuba and with the Cuban Dr. Tomás Romay (1764–1849) in the methodical vaccination of the population of Cuba. He also drafted a manual of procedures for the preservation of the vaccine, and the formation of vaccination boards in the towns where vaccinations took place. In Havana alone, 4879 people were vaccinated. Most importantly, the vaccination boards ensured that vaccination continued in Cuba, and expanded across the entire island.[40]

The interest in natural history of the Spanish monarchs who reigned in Cuba during the eighteenth century was instrumental in bringing about the development of the natural sciences in the island. Under royal commission, the Cuban aristocrat Joaquín de Santa Cruz, Count of Jaruco y Mopox (1769–1807), explored the region around the Bay of Guantanamo in 1796. Although the principal objects of that expedition were to establish fortifications at Guantanamo Bay, and to build roads and construct a canal along the Rio Güines upon which lumber could be transported to Havana for the building of ships, it also had as a purpose the botanical survey of Cuba. After exploring Guantanamo Bay, this expedition reached Havana in June 1797, and the botanist Baltasar Boldó, and the artist and taxidermist José Guío, with the Cuban José Estévez as assistant, collected plants all summer in its immediate vicinity.[41] But more important for the development of modern botany in Cuba was the Cuban sojourn of the botanical expedition under royal patronage, but organized in Mexico by Dr. Martín Sessé. From 1795 to 1798, Dr. Sessé explored the Cuban flora and fauna, and when he returned to Mexico he left in Havana some valuable trees, and a duplicate of the herbarium which his expedition had collected, in the care of the

Cuban-born Mariano Espinosa, professor of surgery and correspondent of the Botanical Garden of Madrid. Dr. Sessé outlined a method for planting collected samples before shipping them to Spain when they could best travel. This plan included the rental of a house with a piece of irrigated land from which originated the botanical garden at Havana.[42] In 1787, Antonio Parra, a soldier stationed in Cuba, published under the patronage of the Spanish governor in Havana a book about the fishes and crustaceans found off the coast of Havana, illustrated by his son Manuel Antonio: *Descripción de diferentes piezas de historia natural, las más del ramo marítimo representadas en setenta y cinco láminas*. The zoological work of Parra can be considered a pioneer of itchthyological studies in Cuba: although it lacks scientific method, it contributed to the knowledge of Cuban zoological species.[43]

Classical music flourished in Cuba by the end of the eighteenth century. In December 1791, the opera *Zemire et Azor*, by the French composer André Gretry, was performed in Spanish translation at the Teatro Principal in Havana. This was the first reported performance of an opera on Cuban soil. In 1775, the composer Esteban Salas was hired by the Cathedral of Santiago de Cuba as chapel master, and by the time of his death in 1803, he had produced a remarkable corpus of sacred music for religious services there. Esteban Salas was born at Havana in December 1725. He was a choirboy in the parish of St. Christopher (later Havana Cathedral), and eventually became organist and choir director there. St. Christopher's had a chapel with instruments, and with singers who performed music for liturgical functions and Mass, so Salas was already an experienced musician when he was hired to be chapel master at the Cathedral of Santiago.[44] The music that Esteban Salas composed in Santiago between 1775 and 1803 was forgotten in the nineteenth century, but it was discovered in the twentieth century. Some of his *villancicos* were published by the Cuban National Library in 1961, and more were published by Editora Musical de Cuba in 1988. Between 1996 and 1997, the Exaudi Chorus of Cuba recorded his *villancicos*, cantatas and Masses for the French label Editions Jade.

In the sixteenth century and in the seventeenth century, outstanding fortresses were built in Cuba, for example that of San Pedro of the Rock of El Morro, designed by Italian engineer Juan Bautista Antonelli in 1639 to protect the entrance to the bay where Santiago de Cuba is located. By the end of the seventeenth century Havana was a mighty, walled city. But most private homes were made of perishable materials, and most churches looked like forts. It was in the eighteenth century that new buildings of a different nature and materials were built at Havana and the other cities founded by the Spaniards in Cuba. Graceful churches were built and decorated in Havana, as well as palaces for the Spanish governor and aristocratic Cuban families. The Cathedral of St. Christopher, finished in 1777, is one of the most exquisite examples of rococo religious architecture in the Americas.[45] In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, painters prospered at Havana, decorating churches and portraying wealthy burghers, aristocrats, and royal officers. José Nicolás de la Escalera (1734–1804), and Vicente Escobar (1762–1839) stand out among the Cuban artists of that period.[46]

Early Cuban Political Agency

In 1808, Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Spain, and imprisoned the King of Spain and Emperor of the Indies and his family. The French emperor forced the Spanish monarch to abdicate to Joseph Bonaparte, his brother. In Spain, a provisional government formed of noblemen, professionals, and entrepreneurs rejected King Joseph as a Napoleonic imposition, and called a convocation of deputies from the overseas domains of the Spanish Crown to form a parliament (Cortes). Cuba sent deputies who represented the interests of the Cuban elites to this parliament. At that time, the defense of the island was in the hands of loyalist Cubans, who manned and led militia battalions known as "*cuerpos de voluntarios*." In 1810 similar military units in South America declared themselves in favor of independence from Spain, but the Cuban *voluntarios* remained loyal to the Spanish Crown (although in that year the Afro-Cuban José Aponte led a failed conspiracy for Cuban independence from Spain). In the 1820s there were two other failed conspiracies to bring about Cuban independence from Spain, this time led by white Cubans. After 1823, the Cuban priest Father Félix Varela preached independence from his exile in the United States of America. But the fact is that the vast majority of the descendants of Spaniards in Cuba remained loyal to the Spanish Crown after the restoration of absolute monarchy following the constitutional regimes of 1808 to 1813 and of 1820 to 1823.[47]

From the analysis of the Cuban military officers' perspective in 1808 made by Allen J. Kuethe in his book *Cuba 1753–1815: Crown, Military, and Society*, it may be assumed that the loyalty of the Cuban elites was not induced by fear, but by self-interest—primarily because the defense of the island was in the hands of Cuban-born officers right through the 1820s. It is doubtful that the loyalty of the Cuban elites was due to ignorance, because by the first quarter of the nineteenth century, they were aware of political, economic, and cultural trends in the western world, and Cuban society had become part of Western civilization. Noticing this, the English historian Froude said: "Be the faults of their administration as heavy as they are alleged to be, the Spaniards have done more to Europeanize their islands than we have done with ours."[48]

It has been argued that Cuban elites forswore independence from Spain between 1808 and 1821 out of fear that slaves in Cuba would revolt and massacre the whites in the island, following the example of the slaves in St. Domingue, the French colony in the island of Hispaniola where the slaves revolted and established the independent Republic of Haiti. It is not well known, however, that in 1818 King Ferdinand VII, by Royal Order, allowed Cubans to trade with all nations with the condition that non-Spanish ships would pay a differential tariff.[49] On December 12, 1818, Father Félix Varela, better known for the separatist convictions that he embraced after 1823, read before the members of the Havana Economic Society an address praising that king for the progress that his Royal Order would bring to Cuba, saying: "Un rey benigno, que se complace en hacer felices, no deja escapar la más ligera circunstancia que pueda esparcir sus bondades; un pueblo fiel aspira en todos momentos a merecerlas." ("A beneficent king, who is happy making his

people happy, loses no opportunity to shower his beneficence; a faithful people is always ready to deserve it.")[50]

Cuban patriots of the early 1800s considered Cuba their motherland, but at the same time they thought her welfare lay within the Spanish monarchy. Perhaps they rejected political independence because they believed that Spain was necessary for Cuba, just as the Czech patriot Frantisek Palacký in 1848 believed that the legitimacy of the House of Habsburg was necessary for his native Bohemia. Palacký believed that the House of Habsburg could preserve in Bohemia estability and the rule of law, while a revolution might bring about political instability without securing the rule of law.[51] Whether out of fear for instability or preference for accommodation, Cuban elites did not reject Spanish sovereignty at the time when most of the elites in mainland Spanish America were doing so in the first decade of the nineteenth century: on that account they deserved the title "*Siempre Fiel Isla de Cuba*" (Always Faithful Isle of Cuba), conferred on Cuba by King Ferdinand VII in 1824. In truth, however, the Cuban elites were not loyal unconditionally, but because they considered the exactions of the Spanish Crown to be less than the benefits that they derived from their association with it.[52]

Notes

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Figure 2.1 View from Trinidad.
Source: Photograph by Andrea Brizzi.

2 The Sugar Kingdom

Nineteenth-Century Cuba

The Last Kingdom of the Indies: Cuba, 1801–1836

The remarkable development of material culture in Cuba between 1800 and 1868 has been analyzed in a beautifully illustrated book, *Cuba entre la opulencia y la pobreza* (Madrid: Aldaba Ediciones, 2004), by Ismael Sarmiento Ramírez. Coffee was introduced in Cuba by French colonists fleeing the slave rebellions that took place in present-day Haiti between 1791 and 1804, and Cuba became a major exporter of coffee.[1] Sugar production in Cuba grew enormously after the royal government began to protect it in the last decade of the eighteenth century. It expanded east from the Havana area and brought wealth to smaller cities like Matanzas and Trinidad. The cultivation of sugar cane and the production of finished sugar near Trinidad expanded over an area covering three valleys that became known as *El Valle de los Ingenios* ("The Valley of the Sugar Mills"). The wealth produced by sugar and slave labor in that area enriched several clans, such as that of the Iznaga family, who became prominent in Cuba and abroad. These local magnates built in Trinidad palatial homes and public buildings like Teatro Brunet, on whose account today this city is considered a World Heritage site.[2] Tobacco was the largest Cuban export after sugar. Cuban tobacco leaf was sold as a commodity, and Cuban hand-rolled cigars became luxury manufactures. Skilled cigar makers were a labor aristocracy. In 1864, workers at the Viñas cigar factory in Bejucal hired a reader to read to them while they rolled cigars. It was at Bejucal in that year, in the factory of Facundo Acosta, that a reader first mounted a platform for his reading.[3] This practice became a widespread self-improvement measure that Cuban cigar workers later on introduced in the United States of America, at Key West, Tampa, and New York City. Economic growth encouraged the introduction of new means of transportation in the island. The first steamboat appeared in 1819, a concession granted to Juan O'Farrill. As early as 1823, three steamboats plied regularly between Havana, Matanzas, Cárdenas, San Juan de los Remedios, and Bahía Honda. In the early 1830s, the first railroad was constructed in Havana with support from the Spanish Crown. A loan of $2 million was raised from a British financing company to be paid for by a specific import/export tax, for a rail line from Havana to Güines that was completed in 1837. By 1860, there were nearly 400 miles of railway in Cuba.[4]

At the same time, Cuba experienced remarkable scientific and literary developments. Interest in medical knowledge, encouraged in Cuba by the Economic Societies and royal authorities in the eighteenth century, was supported in the nineteenth century by professional organizations. By the first half of the nineteenth century, medicine in Cuba was well developed as a modern profession, and medical journals published in Havana disseminated throughout the island the latest medical innovations published in Europe and the United States. The founding of the Cuban Academy of Sciences in 1861 encouraged medical research in Cuba. The most celebrated member of this academy in the nineteenth century was Carlos J. Finlay, who discovered in 1881 the role played by mosquitoes in the transmission of yellow fever.[5] In the 1830s, Cuba experienced a literary flowering that was expressed in the journal *Revista Bimestre Cubana*, edited by the enlightened aristocrat Ricardo del Monte. *Revista Bimestre Cubana* first published the poems by Cuba's first great poet, José María Heredia (not to be confused with the French poet of Cuban origin Jose Maria de Heredia), and it was considered by the Spanish poet Manuel José Quintana the best literary journal published in the Spanish language.[6] The contents of *Revista Bimestre Cubana* was not limited to literature and literary criticism. It published controversial articles on contemporary issues by the Cuban polymath José Antonio Saco (1797–1879), who advocated the abolition of slavery, and was the first to write about a Cuban nation.[7] It is very likely that nonliterary articles by Saco and others published in the *Revista* brought about its closing by the despotic governor General Miguel Tacón in 1834.

Since the times of *Revista Bimestre Cubana*, poetry and literature have been means of expression for a Cuban identity and the concept of a Cuban nation. In the nineteenth century, some Cuban poets and fiction writers were loyal to the Spanish Crown, like Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, (author of *Sab*, the first abolitionist novel written in Spanish), or were apolitical, like Luisa Pérez de Zambrana and Juan Francisco Manzano. But other Cuban poets, like José María Heredia, Gabriel de la Concepción Valdés (known as Plácido), and José Martí, and fiction writers, like Cirilo Villaverde (author of the great Cuban novel, *Cecilia Valdés*), sought Cuba's independence from Spain. In 1893, Havana poet Julián del Casal published the sonnet "A un héroe," inspired by the visit to that city in 1890 of Afro-Cuban independence leader General Antonio Maceo Grajales. Cuban identity was also a theme developed by Cuban philosophers Father Félix Varela and José de la Luz y Caballero during the first half of the nineteenth century.

In 1804, Juan París, chapel master of the Cathedral of Santiago de Cuba, conducted in that city the first performance on Cuban soil of a symphony by Ludwig van Beethoven. Musical education became professionalized in Cuba during the first two decades of the nineteenth century, with the opening of musical academies in Santiago, Havana, and other cities. Opera became established in Havana when General Tacón had an opera theater built there, which he called Teatro de Tacón (today called Gran Teatro de La Habana). With this world-class venue, and the wealth produced by the growing sugar industry, Havana became a port of call for traveling opera companies, and for classic music virtuosos from Europe and the United States. It was at Teatro Tacón that the first performance of "Night in the Tropics," an orchestral extravaganza by American piano

virtuoso and composer Louis Moreau Gottschalk, took place. During the nineteenth century grand theaters were built in two other Cuban cities made wealthy by the sugar industry: Matanzas had Teatro Sauto (opened in 1863) and Cienfuegos had Teatro Terry (opened in 1890).

But Cubans were not mere consumers of Western classical music and admirers of foreign performers. By the 1850s, Cuban musical education began to produce the first Cuban Western classical music virtuosos (José Julián Jiménez and his sons Nicolás and José Manuel, José Silverio White, Ignacio Cervantes, and Claudio José Domingo Brindis de Salas) and composers (Manuel Saumell, Nicolás Ruiz de Espadero, José Silverio White, José Manuel Jiménez, and Ignacio Cervantes).[8] José Silverio White (1836–1918) is remembered today because his "Habanera for two violins and piano," with added lyrics, became popular as the song "La bella cubana," but he wrote many more works for violin and piano, a concerto for violin and orchestra, and a set of violin *études*. The son of a French merchant and a slave, he studied violin at the Paris Conservatory, and became a world famous virtuoso violinist. He lived in Brazil for several years, as music professor for the imperial family, and he was the founding director of the first music conservatory in Rio de Janeiro.[9] José Manuel Jiménez (1851–1917) was also a composer, who wrote virtuoso piano works, a symphonic poem and a collection of songs for female voice in the style of the German lieder. He was born in a family of free blacks where musicianship was a tradition; thus he began his musical education with his father, the violinist José Julián Jiménez. But in 1867 José Manuel and his brother José Nicasio were sent by their father to study music in Germany, where he had studied music himself. José Manuel studied piano at the Music School in Leipzig and at the Paris Conservatory, and toured as a piano virtuoso in Europe from 1871 to 1878. He returned to Cuba in 1879, giving his first Cuba recital at the Gran Teatro de Tacón. Settled in Cienfuegos, Jiménez founded there a music conservatory, and was active in the musical life of the city.[10] He was one of the performers at the opening concert of the Teatro Terry. Jiménez went back to Germany in 1890, and when he died in 1917 he was assistant director of a conservatory in Hamburg. Ignacio Cervantes also studied music in Europe, and was for a while a traveling piano virtuoso, but he settled in Cuba early in his career. Cervantes composed *zarzuelas* (Spanish operetta), and many works for piano, but he is best known for his "Danzas Cubanas," short piano pieces where he gave classical expression to Cuban popular rhythms.[11]

Cuban popular music benefitted from the professionalization of the teaching of music in the island, and it contributed to world music one of the best-known dances of the nineteenth century, the danza habanera. This dance of syncopated rhythm descended from the "contradanza," a Cuban version of the French "contredance" (itself derived from the English "country dance"). It has been included in the scores of operas and symphonic works, and it can be considered the ancestor of ballroom dances such as the Argentinean tango, and the Cuban danzón.[12] The bands that played these dances included piano, bass and fiddles, in addition to percussion instruments. To be aware of the richness of nineteenth century classical music tradition in Cuba is important in order to appreciate the degree to which it influenced the popular music of the island.

Painting and drawing in Cuba benefitted in the nineteenth century from the founding of the fine arts academy of San Alejandro. Students at San Alejandro were trained in the neoclassic style, and many of them became portrait painters, such as Federico Martínez, José Arburu Morell, and Armando Menocal. Engraving and lithography saw a flowering in Cuba, expressed in books of prints of genre scenes produced for the travelers' market, as well as in major illustrated books such as *Los ingenios de Cuba*, published in Havana in 1857 by Justo Germán Cantero with superb lithography illustrations by Eduardo G. Laplante.[13] This monumental book on the sugar mills of Cuba merits mention, because most of the wealth in Cuba that allowed for the flourishing of the arts and letters mentioned above was created by the sale of sugar for the world market.

Although there was no school of architecture in nineteenth-century Cuba similar to the fine arts academy of San Alejandro, Cuban master builders erected magnificent public buildings and stately homes for the families made rich by sugar and tobacco. On account of its subsequent decline, the Central Cuba city of Trinidad preserves at the time of this writing a large number of palacial homes and urban spaces from that period, predominantly in the neoclassic style. The neoclassic style dominated in nineteenth-century Cuban architecture, but on account of the construction materials used locally (stucco-covered brick and mortar walls which were generally painted in pastel colors), Cuban neoclassic structures are less cold than the granite and marble covered contemporary examples of that style in Europe. Cuban structures of that period exhibit another peculiarity: palladian windows and interior entryways with colored stained-glass panes crowning their arches, known as *medio puntos*.[14]

Several authors have argued that despite the centralization and the mercantilism introduced in Cuba in the eighteenth century by the Bourbon dynasty, the Cuban elites were able to create a space for themselves. In his book *América Hispánica (1492–1898)*, Guillermo Céspedes del Castillo made the insightful comment that Cuban elites up to the 1830s considered their island to be a *reino de Indias* ("Kingdom of the Indies" was the official designation of the American domains of the King of Spain until the death of King Ferdinand VII, and it placed them under the personal rule of the monarch and not under that of Castile) rather than a colony of Spain.[15] But this unwritten arrangement between the Cuban elites and the Spanish Crown ended in 1837. After the death of King Ferdinand VII in 1833, under his daughter Isabel II (r. 1833–1868), a third constitutional government was established in Spain, and in 1837 Cuba sent deputies to the parliament (*Cortes*) meeting in Madrid. But in 1837 the Cuban deputies, and those sent from Puerto Rico and the Philippine Islands (the only remaining sizable overseas domains of the Spanish Crown by that time), were not allowed to sit in the Madrid parliament. The leaders of the new constitutional regime in Spain were unwilling to give them political representation at the Madrid parliament, but declared that they would be given special laws, appropriate to them. In reaction to this exclusion, soon afterwards many Cubans began to plot for the independence of Cuba from Spain.[16]

Other changes that took place in Cuba under the constitutional regime in Spain that followed the death of King Ferdinand VII in 1833 were the confiscation of Catholic Church property, and the disbanding of the religious orders.

Members of the religious orders staffed many churches in Cuba, and the expulsion of its members left those churches without pastors. In 1851, the Spanish government and the Holy See made a treaty whereby the Church agreed to accept the confiscation of Church property that took place in the 1830s; in exchange, the Spanish government agreed to pay the salaries of parish priests, an agreement that placed the secular clergy in the position of government employees. In Spain, the Catholic Church as an institution recovered after 1851 from the anti-clerical government policies of the 1830s, but in Cuba the new settlement undermined the position of the Catholic Church as an autonomous institution for the remainder of the nineteenth century.[17]

The religious orders were allowed back in Cuba after 1851, and there was a period of Church reform during the reign of St. Anthony Mary Claret as Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba, between 1852 and 1856. Archbishop Claret became intent on reforming the sexual morals of Cubans, among whom concubinage was common. His traditional sexual morality went hand-in-hand with rejection of racial prejudice. He exhorted the usually non-white female partners of free unions to leave their white lovers if they refused to "honor them" ("making honest women out of them" by marriage). After a Spaniard whose mulatto mistress had left after hearing Archbishop Claret preach against living in concubinage tried to kill him in the eastern Cuban city of Holguin, he was recalled back to Spain, and his successors did not imitate his reforming zeal.[18] Interracial marriages have never been forbidden by Church law, but the 1848 penal code in Cuba required that permission be asked from the civil authorities before entering into one. Priests performing them without that permission faced the penalty of imprisonment and of a fine of 50 to 500 *duros*.[19] On account of that legislation, in 1879 the Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba made an attempt to obtain a definite statement from the civil authorities concerning interracial marriages, emphasizing that the difference of colors does not constitute a Canon Law impediment. This request brought about a decree from the Ministry of Overseas Affairs in January 1881 stating that there should be no legal impediment to interracial marriages.[20]

After 1833, the number of Cuban vocations to the priesthood and to the religious life began to diminish, and it was never again as high as it had been before that date. The Cuban gentry, who had encouraged their sons and daughters to enter the priesthood and religious orders when they were part of the administration of the Spanish monarchy, and when the Church was a preponderant institution in Cuba, stopped doing so once the priesthood and being a member of a religious order ceased being prestigious, and the Catholic Church lost her former autonomy and eminence.[21]

The Demotion of Cuba to Colony and the Cuban Reaction: 1837–1868

It is puzzling to some that the leaders of the Spanish Cortes of 1837 expelled the deputies from the overseas domains of the Spanish Crown in America and Asia, after having invited those territories to send deputies to Madrid. It is possible that the leaders of the Cortes may have reconsidered their initial invitation after

realizing how incongruous it was to have in the Spanish parliament elected deputies from territories where the bondage of people from Africa or of African descent was allowed, and where some sectors of the population were denied full civil rights. Their reference to special laws fitted to societies like those existing in Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines suggests that this may have been the reason for their action. Another reason given for the expulsion from the Cortes of the overseas deputies is that the leaders of those *Cortes* were "laissez faire" Liberals, for whom colonies were places for exploitation by the metropolis, and not for integration in it. What is certain is that the course taken antagonized colonial elites in all three territories whose delegates were expelled from the Spanish parliament in 1837.

Before 1837, there were conspiracies in Cuba by people or groups that sought Cuba's independence from Spain, such as the José Aponte conspiracy in 1812 and the *Soles y Rayos de Bolívar* conspiracy of José Francisco Lemus in 1823.[22] Father Félix Varela, who had been sent as a deputy to the Madrid parliament from Cuba in 1820, became disillusioned with the Spanish monarchy after the end of the second constitutional period in 1823. Exiled in the United States after 1823, Father Varela published a short-lived periodical titled *El Habanero*, in whose pages he exhorted Cubans to rebel against Spanish despotism and to establish an independent republic. His exasperation with the Spanish government in Cuba, and the seeming Cuban acquiescence to it was so great that in 1825 he wrote to US diplomat Joel Roberts Pointsett letters supporting the intervention of this country in Cuba.[23] But there was not much support for independence or US intervention in Cuba among the Cuban elites during the first three decades of the nineteenth century, although in 1808 and 1822, individuals claiming to be agents of Cuban planters approached the US government proposing the annexation of Cuba to the United States as a state. Although the United States had acquired Spanish territory since 1805—first, when it purchased from the Emperor of the French, Napoleon Bonaparte, the Louisiana Territory that he had wrested from Spain two years earlier, and then, in 1819, when it purchased from Spain itself the peninsula of Florida—in the first half of the nineteenth century, the US government had reasons to think that Great Britain would oppose Cuba falling into its hands, and it had no interest in a conflict with its former colonial metropolis.[24]

After 1837, separatism from Spain was supported by Cuban planters, but the Cuban independence plots that they supported in the 1840s and 1850s had as their final goal the annexation of Cuba to the United States, and had as supporters abroad planters from the southern states of the United States, who wanted Cuba to join it as a slave state. Gaspar Betancourt Cisneros was one of the most prominent of the annexationist Cuban planters. He was born in 1803 in the city of Puerto Príncipe (present-day Camagüey) to a prominent family of Spanish descent. A wealthy and influential man, in the 1820s he was instrumental in the cultural and material development of his region—educational activities, a local harbor, a railway. The obstacles that the colonial authorities presented to his projects, however, exasperated him. By 1840, he had become a proponent of the annexation of Cuba to the United States on the grounds that the material progress of Cuba was suppressed by its association with Spain. His disgust with Spain and Spaniards went beyond socio-economic and political considerations. In letters to

his friend José Antonio Saco, he decried his Spanish ancestry, and the Spanish stock of white Cubans, expressing hopes that once Cuba became part of the United States, intermarriages between Cubans and Anglo-Americans would improve the racial stock of the Cuban population. He lived exiled in the United States for a while, but he went back to Cuba, and died there in 1866.[25] Many Cubans of planter familites stayed in the United States and became naturalized US citizens. Some of them, like José Agustín Quintero and Ambrosio José Gonzales, showed their belief in African slavery was compatible with the aspirations to political and economic freedom of white people like themselves, by joining the Confederacy army during the War of Secession in the United States.[26]

The most celebrated projects by Cuban separatists with annexationist ends were the expeditions conducted by Narciso López, an ex-officer of the Royal Spanish army who had settled in Cuba after Venezuela became independent of Spain. Narciso López was born in Venezuela in 1798, to a Spanish family. He was an officer in the royal army when the independence movement started in Venezuela, and he remained loyal to the Spanish Crown to the end, going to Spanish Cuba after the defeat of his side in that conflict. In Cuba he left the army, and in 1827 he went to Spain. In Spain, he rejoined the army, and eventually became first aide-de camp to Commander-in-Chief Gerónimo Valdés. López returned to Cuba in 1841 when Valdés became Captain General, and he held successive government posts in Cuba during Valdés's administration, including that of President of the Executive Military Commission. But in 1843, Captain General Valdés returned to Spain, and López lost his connection to government patronage. He left the Spanish army again, and launched a series of unsuccessful business ventures, and as business failures grew, so too did his disenchantment with the Spanish administration of Cuba.[27] General López joined a separatist conspiracy in 1848, and when that conspiracy was discovered by the colonial authorities he left Cuba for the United States.

In the United States, General López received financial assistance from Cuban exiles and North Americans in the southern states, who wanted Cuba to join the United States as a slave-holding state, for the organization of military expeditions to Cuba. He led two expeditions to Cuba, one in 1850 and the other in 1851. Both expeditions were unsuccessful. After the 1850 expedition, he and his followers were able to escape back to the United States, but in 1851 they were captured and executed. Many volumes have been written to prove that Narciso López wanted the absolute independence of Cuba, and not a Cuba independent from Spain in order to be annexed to the United States.[28] But historians Tom Chaffin and Robert E. May have shown that his correspondence with the southern US entrepreneur John Quintman indicates that he was party to an agreement according to which a successful landing and the establishment of a foothold in Cuba was going to be followed by reinforcements from his associates in the United States.[29] Perhaps the insistence of some Cuban historians on the purely separatist intentions of General López is motivated by the embarrassing fact that today's Cuban flag is the flag that Narciso López designed for his annexationist expeditions, and that his inspiration for that flag was the solitary star flag of those who in 1836 declared the independence of Texas from Mexico.[30]

During the same decades, a reformist group developed among Cubans conscious of their being descendants of Spaniards, who were not eager to be absorbed into a nation state where the English-descended population was hegemonic, and had already disenfranchised people of Spanish descent in Louisiana and in Texas. José Antonio Saco was one of them, and in 1848 he published in Paris a manifesto against the idea of the annexation of Cuba to the United States, and in favor of home rule for Cuba under the Spanish Crown.[31] José Antonio Saco was born in the eastern Cuba city of Bayamo in 1797. He was educated in Santiago de Cuba, but moved to Havana, where in 1836 he was selected to be deputy for Cuba at the Cortes. Saco wrote the remonstrance of the overseas deputies to the leaders of those Cortes for expelling them, and demoting their homelands to the rank of colonies. Back in Cuba, he upset the colonial government, and Cuban planters, by publishing articles proposing the abolition of slavery, and he was deported to Spain. Saco settled in Paris, France, where he continued writing on Cuban affairs. He cultivated a concept of Cuban identity predicated on ethnic background, language and culture. He argued that such a thing as a Cuban nation had developed in Cuba from a Spanish matrix, and that Cubans would be able to preserve this identity under Spain, but not if Cuba became part of the United States, a nation with a completely different language and culture. For all this one can argue that José Antonio Saco was the first to articulate the concept of a Cuban nation, although his concept of Cubanness did not include the Cuban-born descendants of Africans.[32]

In the nineteenth century, Cuba exported coffee, tobacco, copper, cotton, beeswax, and hides, as well as sugar; but by the middle of that century, the latter represented the largest percent of Cuban exports.[33] In 1849, Cuba was the largest cane sugar producer in the world, followed by the British West Indies. Even when beet sugar producers are included, Cuba was still the largest total producer, with an annual output of 220,000 tons of sugar when the total world production was 1,028,259 tons (including both cane and beet sugar).[34] Therefore, the production of sugar—a labor-intensive process dependent on a reliable work force—was extremely influential in the course of events in Cuba during the nineteenth century. The importance of sugar for the prosperity of the Cuban economy made Cuba dependent on slavery, and the reliance of Cuban elites (most of whom were involved in sugar production) on slavery made their complaints about not having self-government seem hollow. It was because Cuban elites did not want to end slavery that the first attempts at independence from Spain by some of their members were projects that had as their final aim the annexation of Cuba to the United States as a slave state.

In the first half of the nineteenth century some merchants in Cuba accumulated capital on grand scale, and became the financial backers of Cuban-born planters. The Englishman James Drake was one of these merchants. He settled in Cuba during the last decade of the eighteenth century, and made a fortune as a financier. By the middle of the nineteenth century, he had married into an old Cuban family of Spanish ancestry and had a large family. One of his sons, Santiago Drake, established a horse-driven omnibus transportation line between central Havana and Puentes Grandes, and at Sagua la Grande he established a steamer line.[35] Another prominent merchant in nineteenth-century Cuba was the Venezuelan Tomás Terry,

who settled in the Central Cuba city of Cienfuegos in the 1820s. By 1859, he had acquired two sugar cane plantations: "La Caridad" and "La Esperanza."[36] Tomás Terry's son Emilio continued the family business, and became a philanthropist and promoter of the arts in Cienfuegos, where he built the Teatro Terry.

The descendants of these merchants and others like them, followed on the footsteps of their ancestors, and established entrepreneurial dynasties, sometimes not by direct descent, but through nephews. Such was the case of Julián Zulueta y Amondo, a Spaniard who settled in Cuba in 1838, working for an uncle. It is alleged that he started his fortune in the (illegal) slave trade, but by 1845 he was the owner of a sugar mill named "El Regalado," which he modernized and renamed "Alava." Zulueta was selected a councilman in Havana's City Council, where he was influential in urban redevelopment, and in the commercial and social affairs of the capital city.[37] Many Spanish merchants and their Cuban descendants in Cuba purchased ships in Great Britain and registered them there, using them to export the product of their Cuban mills and plantations.[38] According to Angel Bahamonde and José Cayuela, before 1878 British shipping and British financing were prominent in Cuban harbors.[39]

Although Cuba was a Spanish colony, in the nineteenth century Cubans traded with the whole world, and the means of production in the island were in the hands of people born or residing in Cuba. Cuban Reformists were aware of this, and therefore they did not think that a break with Spain was necessary to make changes in Cuba. For example, they were diligent in their efforts to find labor alternatives to African slavery. It was through the efforts of reformists that Chinese contract workers went to Cuba in the 1850s.[40] Cuban reformists found friends in Madrid, and they obtained support from two generals who were sent to Cuba as governors: Francisco Serrano, and Domingo Dulce. The arrival at Havana of General Francisco Serrano as Governor General in 1859 opened a period of conciliation toward the Cuban elites, continued by his successor, General Domingo Dulce (governor General from 1862 to 1865). The efforts of the reformists brought about the formation in Cuba of a proto-party, the *Partido Reformista*, and the convocation of a consultation group from Cuba and Puerto Rico by the Spanish government. Unfortunately for the reformist projects, the administration that called for this consultation group (*Junta de Información*) in 1866 was no longer in power when its members arrived in Madrid in 1867, and after their return to Cuba and Puerto Rico in that year, none of the reforms that they had proposed were implemented.[41]

The First War of Independence: 1868–1878

The political situation in Spain had been unstable ever since the death of King Ferdinand VII in 1833, partly because his brother Carlos did not recognize the succession of Ferdinand VII's daughter Isabel, and had tried twice to overthrow her by force of arms. But political instability in Spain was also fostered by the ineptitude and wavering character of Queen Isabel II. From the time when she attained majority she wavered between liberal and conservative influences, until, in September 1868, a military coup d'état by liberal officers overthrew her, and

with her the Bourbon dynasty that had reigned in Spain since 1700.[42] Shortly after the Bourbon dynasty was overthrown, Cubans and Puerto Ricans frustrated by the disappointing aftermath of the *Junta de Información*, rose up in arms in order to become independent from Spain. The Cuban uprising was supported by middle-size plantation owners, farmers, and cattle rangers, in the eastern region of the island, led by Bayamo landlord Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, who, raising a Cuban flag of his own design on October 10, 1868, proclaimed the independence of Cuba from Spain, and freed the slaves at his sugar mill La Demajagua.

Carlos Manuel de Céspedes was born in the eastern Cuba city of Bayamo on April 18, 1819, to a family of landlords of Spanish descent. In 1835 he went to Havana University to study law, and in 1840 he went to Spain to study at the University of Barcelona. After finishing his studies in Barcelona, in 1843, he traveled widely throughout Europe until 1844, when he returned to Bayamo. In Bayamo he practiced law, and became active in the cultural life of the town. He first got into difficulties with local authorities in 1851, for criticizing at an official banquet a toast celebrating the capture of General López. After being arrested in Bayamo in that year, he settled near Manzanillo, where he began to conspire in 1855.[43] Declarations of independence had been made in Cuba before by leaders of failed uprisings such as Joaquín Agüero in Puerto Príncipe (present-day Camagüey) in 1851, and by leaders of expeditions from the United States, like those of Narciso López in the 1850s, but the declaration of Cuban independence made by Carlos Manuel de Céspedes on October 10, 1868 was different. It led to a ten-year civil war that failed to bring Cuban independence, but brought about political and social changes such as Cuban representation in the Madrid parliament in 1879, the implementation in the island of the Spanish Constitution of 1876 and of constitutional rights in 1881, which extended the rights of Spanish citizens to all those born in Cuba or who were permanent residents on Cuban soil, and the total abolition of slavery throughout the island in 1886. Consideration of the importance of Carlos Manuel de Céspedes in Cuban history motivated Cuban historians to call him "Padre de la Patria" (Father of the Cuban Nation).

In April of 1869, the Cuban rebels met in the town of Guáimaro (in what is today Camagüey province) to draft a constitution for a Republic of Cuba independent from Spain.[44] The Guáimaro assembly decided to adopt the flag designed by Narciso López as the flag for the nascent Republic of Cuba. The Cuban planters who rebelled in 1868 were willing to abolish slavery in Cuba, and it is indicative of this willingness that those who gathered at Guáimaro also wrote to US President Ulysses Grant, asking for the annexation of Cuba to the United States, where slavery had been abolished in 1865. President Grant never replied to this written request from the Cuban separatists, however, and the latter did not abolish black slavery immediately. The Guáimaro Constitution declared that all Cubans were free, but the House of Representatives of the new Cuban Republic in Arms met after this proclamation, and decided that the abolition of slavery would be followed by a *Reglamento de Libertos* obliging the ex-slave to work for his previous master during a certain period of time, although the latter would be obliged to pay him a salary, and to feed and clothe him for the duration of his forced employment.[45]

The Cuban separatists had capable military leaders who defeated the colonial army in several encounters despite their disadvantage in military resources. Perhaps the most prominent among them was the patrician Ignacio Agramonte y Loynaz, born in Puerto Príncipe on December 23, 1841 to Ignacio Agramonte y Sánchez, an officer in the royal administration. In 1852 the young Agramonte went to study in Spain, but he returned to Cuba in 1857, and finished his secondary education at Colegio El Salvador, in Havana. In 1865, he received his law degree from Havana University, and in 1867 he was appointed judge of the peace in the district of Guadalupe, in the Havana region. Early in 1868, Agramonte was approached to join a separatist conspiracy by a prominent Cuban exile in New York, Manuel de Quesada, but he did not become involved in conspiratorial activities until November of that year, when he attended a meeting of the Cuban Revolutionary Junta of Puerto Príncipe, which had seconded Céspedes' uprising, but had raised the annexationist flag designed by General López. On November 26, 1868, this Junta appointed Agramonte to the Comité Revolucionario de Camagüey. Agramonte represented his region at Guáimaro, and he was one of those who proposed to write to US President Ulysses Grant, asking for the annexation of Cuba to the United States. He was named a general by the civil government of the Cuban Republic in Arms in 1868, and he died in battle in 1873.[46]

Three younger separatist officers rose up in the ranks of the Cuban Liberation Army during the war of 1868 who were going to be influential in the destiny of Cuba: Máximo Gómez, Calixto García Iñiguez, and Antonio Maceo Grajales. Máximo Gómez was born on November 18, 1836, in the Dominican Republic. He was an officer in the army of that nation in 1861, when it asked for annexation to Spain. After a revolt forced an end to that union in 1865, he remained loyal to the Spanish regime, and went to Cuba with other Dominican officers who remained loyal to the Spanish Crown. After having differences with the authorities in Santiago de Cuba, he lost his faith in Spain, and leaving the royal army, he entered civilian life. In 1868 he was inducted by one of his neighbors in the separatist conspiracy.[47] Calixto García Iñiguez was born on August 4, 1839 in the city of Holguin, the grandson of Calixto García Luna e Izquierdo, a Spaniard in the royal army in Venezuela, who after the royalist defeat at Carabobo in 1821 went to Cuba, and settled with his wife and children in the eastern region of the island. Calixto García Iñiguez farmed near the town of Jiguaní when Céspedes proclaimed the independence of Cuba, and he joined a group of insurgents under his neighbor Donato Mármol.[48] Antonio Maceo Grajales was born in eastern Cuba on June 14, 1845. His father was Marcos Maceo, a Venezuelan of African and Spanish ancestry who had arrived in Cuba in 1825 as a member of the royal army defeated by Simón Bolívar in Venezuela. In Cuba Marcos Maceo became a prosperous farmer, and met Mariana Grajales, a woman born in Santiago de Cuba, but whose parents (free people of Spanish and African descent) had come to Cuba from Santo Domingo (present-day Dominican Republic), after it became independent from Spain, and was invaded by Haiti. Antonio Maceo Grajales went to grammar school, and after he finished his primary education he worked for his father. He was inducted in the separatist conspiracy early in 1868, by his friend Exuperancio Alvarez.[49] Although Marcos

Maceo had been a loyalist in Venezuela, and Mariana Grajales had loyalist parents, in 1868 both forswore their loyalty to the Spanish Crown, and encouraged their sons to fight for Cuban independence. Mariana Grajales has become in Cuban political imagery the equivalent of the Spartan mothers who allegedly told their sons to die fighting for their homeland.[50]

During the Ten Years War of independence unleashed by Céspedes, two civilian separatist men of substance became prominent: Tomás Estrada Palma, and Salvador Cisneros Betancourt, Marquis of Santa Lucía. Tomás Estrada Palma was born in 1832 in the city of Bayamo to a prominent family of Spanish descent. He was a member of the city council of Bayamo for several years, and he was holding office as such when he joined the separatist cause. In 1875, he was elected President of the Cuban Republic in Arms, and he was holding that office when he was captured by the royal army, and deported to the Castle of Figueras, in Spain.[51] Salvador Cisneros Betancourt was born in Puerto Príncipe to a Cuban aristocratic family of Spanish descent. He joined the insurgents and became a member of the entourage of the civil government of the Cuban Republic in Arms.[52] All the prominent men involved in the 1868 uprising were member of masonic lodges, and that fact has made some historians see a direct connection between free masonry and Cuban independence from Spain.[53]

Despite the exploits of Cuban separatist military leaders, the 1868 war for independence never extended to western Cuba. In the late 1860s and early 1870s, Spain was in turmoil, and none of the administrations that tried to govern Cuba from Madrid in those years (that included a short-lived new dynasty, and an even more short-lived Spanish Republic) had the resources to pay for the soldiers and arms needed to restore order there. But wealthy Spanish merchants in Cuba rose to the occasion at this juncture, and they used their resources to outfit paramilitary battalions (*voluntarios*) formed by recent Spanish immigrants to Cuba, who terrorized Havana, but kept the Cuban rebellion from spreading to the West.[54] Those wealthy Spanish merchants took advantage of the sales of property confiscated to separatists and suspects of separatist sympathies who left Cuba during the war, to acquire estates and plantations that they used to attain social prominence. Most of the propertied Cubans whose properties were confiscated had fled to the United States, and they did not return to their native land when peace was restored in it under Spanish sovereignty; they remained in exile, filled with resentment, and ready to assist the enemies of the mother country that they had rejected.[55] Gonzalo de Quesada was born into one of these Cuban families. He was a boy when his parents moved from Havana to New York City. He attended the College of the City of New York, and became a lawyer at the firm of Stearns and Curtis in 1891.[56]

The restoration of the Bourbon dynasty in Spain in 1874, under King Alfonso XII (r. 1874–1885), son of Isabel II, stabilized Spanish political and economic life, and in 1877 Arsenio Martínez Campos, the general who had restored the Bourbon dynasty to the Spanish throne, was sent to Cuba to end the rebellion there. Before the arrival of General Martínez Campos to Cuba, the separatist rebels had become weakened by dissension. According to General Máximo Gómez in his *Convenio del Zanjón. Relato de los últimos sucesos en Cuba*, the

civil government of the Cuban Republic in Arms was weak and indecisive, and the Cuban Liberation Army was plagued by the insobordinate attitude of officers who refused to accept commissions outside of their native region in the island, and by that of common soldiers unwilling to serve under officers whom they did not like. General Gómez states that by the end of 1877, Cubans were no longer glad to sacrifice themselves for Cuba's independence. Thus he explains how once General Martínez Campos arrived in Cuba, and adopted a policy of conciliation, he won over a vast majority of the leaders of the Cuban Liberation Army, who were willing to sign on February 11, 1878 an agreement to lay down their arms in exchange for political representation for Cubans in the Spanish *Cortes* (Parliament), freedom for former slaves fighting in the Liberation Army, a complete amnesty to the rebels and their collaborators, and the freedom to leave Cuba for those rebels unwilling to stay in a Spanish Cuba.[57]

A group of soldiers and officers in the Liberation Army under the leadership of General Antonio Maceo protested against the peace treaty signed at El Zanjón, in eastern Cuba, in February 1878. But despite the formal protest of Maceo and his followers at a meeting with General Martínez Campos at Baraguá, near Santiago de Cuba, the first Cuban war of independence came to an end ten years after it had begun. In 1879 there was an attempt to restart the war in Cuba, called in Cuban history *La Guerra Chiquita* ("The Little War"), and in 1890 General Antonio Maceo returned to Cuba, apparently for family business, but really to begin a new war for independence. Both attempts failed.[58] In 1998, Cuban historian Oscar Zanetti Lecuona wrote: "El pacto del Zanjón marcó un punto de declive en las tendencias independentistas dentro de la sociedad cubana, dando paso a la transitoria hegemonía de fuerzas políticas que consideraban factible la modernización del país integrado, o al amparo, del Estado Español" ("The Pacto del Zanjón marked a decline of the separatist spirit in Cuban society, beginning a short-lived hegemony in Cuba of political groups who considered possible the modernization of Cuba within, or under the sovereignty, of Spain).[59]

Cuba as an Overseas Province of Spain: Reforms and Political Parties from 1878–1895

Contrary to what is said by some historians, in 1878 Cubans were granted political representation in the Madrid parliament (knows as Las Cortes). Also in that year, Cuba was divided into six provinces (Pinar del Río, La Habana, Matanzas, Las Villas, Puerto Príncipe, and Cuba), and electoral districts were drawn. Those six provinces, and their "municipios" would be maintained after Cuba's independence from Spain. Although the political representation granted to Cubans in the Madrid parliament after 1878 was limited by property requirements (like political representation in Spain, France, Austria-Hungary, and most states at that time), and by a twisted electoral law that indirectly favored urban dwellers, and those working in industry and commerce (largely Spanish immigrants to the island), it gave Cubans experience with the mechanisms of representative government. Also in 1878, the royal government allowed in Cuba the implementation of the laws of freedom of the press and of association, just as in Spain.

Although the implementation of these laws was challenged, by 1887 works critical of the Spanish administration were being published in Cuba, such as Fermín Valdés Domínguez's book about the judicial murder of seven Cuban university students at the instigation of the voluntarios in Havana in November 1871, *El 27 de noviembre* (Havana: Imprenta La Correspondencia, 1887). The implementation in 1881 of the Spanish Constitution of 1876 in Cuba made Spanish citizens with constitutional rights of all those born in Cuba, and of long-standing residents of the island (including former slaves). This legal dispensation represented nothing less than the establishment of the rule of law in Cuba.

The emancipation without limitations of all slaves in 1886 made legal citizens throughout Cuba of thousands of individuals who had been considered chattel before. The theoretical and limited abolition of slavery in western Cuba by the Cuban rebels in 1868 is usually brought up in order to dismiss the significance of the 1886 Spanish decree of total abolition of slavery on the island. However, that point of view ignores the fact that the abolition decree of the Cuban rebels in 1868 affected only the small territory that they were able to control, while the 1886 royal decree affected all those who were slaves throughout the island, including western Cuba, where the majority of the slaves in Cuba lived.[60]

Between 1878 and 1895, thousands of Spanish immigrants arrived in Cuba willing to work at anything, and many of them took employment as laborers in plantations and sugar mills, performing tasks that previously had been considered inappropriate for free white people. Before the royal decree of 1886 abolishing slavery, some Cuban planters had made contract labor arrangements with the Chinese government through Spanish authorities, but paid labor did not become established as the sole mode of labor in Cuba until the Spanish government abolished slavery completely, and white Spanish immigrants showed willingness to work side by side with blacks.[61] Many of the 224,000 Spanish immigrants who went to Cuba between 1882 and 1894 had embraced radical ideologies, like socialism and anarchism, and introduced them to the island from the grassroots before Cuba became an independent nation state.[62] Some of them were given land by the Crown, which they farmed as *colonos* (the word used at that time to describe farmers who grew sugar cane for sugar mills).[63] Quite a few prospered, and their descendants became the foundation of a Cuban rural middle class.

After 1878, literacy spread in Cuba, because of an education reform bill ordering that towns of over 500 people must have two public schools, one for boys and one for girls, built and maintained at the expense of the towns themselves. The number of public schools in Cuba went up from 535 in 1883 to 904 in 1895. Despite the Cuban war of independence of 1895, which disrupted civilian life and caused the destruction of many schools, illiteracy decreased from over 80 percent down to 66 percent of the total population between 1860 and 1898, according to a report of the census of Cuba taken in 1899 by the Army of the United States.[64] Decrees demanding the racial desegregation of schools favored the spread of literacy throughout all sectors of the population of the island. Racial integration in schools was opposed by many whites, but, between 1893 and 1895, Governor Emilio Calleja enforced the implementation of the

desegregation of schools personally.[65] The 1899 American army census found that in that year the number of Cubans who could read was 36 percent of the total population of the island, but that the percentage of the literate population was higher in the provinces of Havana (61.3 percent) and Puerto Príncipe (49.1 percent).[66] At the same time, the lowest literacy rate in the southern states of the United States was in Louisiana at 62 percent; and in Argentina it was 47 percent; but in Portugal it was lower than in Cuba at 27 percent.[67]

In the early decades of the nineteenth century, the position of blacks in Cuba had deteriorated, because in the 1830s, restrictions had been established to the manumission of slaves by self-purchase (a legal recourse called *coartación*), to the opportunities of employment for free men of African ancestry holding liberal professions such as schoolteacher and journalist, and to the celebration of interracial marriages. A conspiracy for an uprising of Afro-Cubans was discovered in 1844 and cruelly repressed.[68] The repression of those alleged to be implicated in this conspiracy (called the Conspiracy of La Escalera, because of the ladder to which suspects were tied to be flogged) ended the literary career of the Afro-Cuban poet Juan Francisco Manzano (1797–1853), and the life of another, Gabriel de la Concepción Valdés, known as Plácido (1809–1844).

Although the repression following the discovery of the Escalera Conspiracy decimated the elites of free blacks in Cuba, it did not destroy them. From 1844 to 1878 Cubans of African ancestry continued writing and publishing poetry.[69] During the war of Cuban independence of 1868–1878, Afro-Cubans fought with distinction, and some of them, like Antonio Maceo Grajales and his brother José, became officers in the Cuban Liberation Army. In this context, the passing of several laws between 1867 and 1893 abolishing ancient laws enforcing racial segregation was a very important step for the integration of blacks in Cuban society brought about by the Spanish government during the last decades of Spain's sovereignty in Cuba.[70] Between 1878 and 1898, Afro-Cubans published newspapers and magazines addressed to their community, and in 1891 the Afro-Cuban writer Martín Morúa Delgado published at Havana his historical novel *Sofia*, explicitly critical of slavery and racial prejudice in Cuba.[71]

The implementation in Cuba of the laws of freedom of the press and of association existing in Spain allowed free Afro-Cubans to form mutual aid societies, and to publish periodicals addressed to the Afro-Cuban population.[72] In 1881, all legal impediments to interracial marriages were abolished, and through a series of decrees by the governor of Cuba during the 1880s, the laws segregating public transportation, public schools, and public places (like cafes, hotels, theaters, and restaurants) were abolished, in great part due to the activism of Afro-Cuban mutual aid societies and the agitation of the Afro-Cuban press. Afro-Cubans participated in the political life that developed in Cuba after it obtained representation in the *Cortes* (Spanish parliament) in Madrid. From 1892 to 1896, the Afro-Cuban writer Martín Morúa Delgado was an active member of the Cuban *Autonomista* Party.

In 1891, the Afro-Cuban journalist Juan Gualberto Gómez won an appeal to the Supreme Court in Madrid after being arrested in Havana in that year for having published in his newspaper *La Fraternidad* the article "Por qué soy

separatista" ("Why I Am for Cuban Independence"). Rafael María de Labra, a Cuban lawyer resident in Madrid, presented his appeal before the Spanish Supreme Court, arguing that the Spanish law of freedom of the press allowed Spanish citizens (which Gómez was on account of having been born in Spanish Cuba) to express political opinions even when they were for a different organization of the state, provided they did not conspire in order to attain them through extra-legal means. In his defense of Gómez, Labra referred to the existence of a Spanish Republican Party, and he won his case. Gómez was released from prison, and continued publishing a newspaper. In the early 1890s he and Martín Morúa Delgado were inducted as members of the prestigious *Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País* of Havana, at that time Spanish Cuba's equivalent to a national academy of science and letters.[73] Some Afro-Cubans created associations of a marked loyalist tone, the *Casinos españoles de hombres de color*. They were funded by Rodolfo Fernando Trova y Blanco de Lagardere, a man who from his loyalist position defended the concept of equal rights for Afro-Cubans.[74]

During the period of relative freedom of expression between 1878 and 1895, the University of Havana was not the leading intellectual institution in Cuba. The Economic Society of Havana and its affiliates in smaller Cuban cities held that position. Since 1861, the Royal Science Society was the forum for scientific research in Cuba, although a new institution for medical research was founded at Havana in the 1870s, the Instituto Histobacteorológico y de vacunación antirrábica, one of the first bacteorological laboratories in the Americas.[75] But the University of Havana was not a dead institution in January 1892, when Spanish Secretary of Colonial Affairs (*Ministro de Ultramar*) Francisco Romero Robledo passed a law taking away from it the right to confer the doctoral degree. Romero Robledo's "reform" encountered fierce opposition from faculty and students, including a student strike. The strength of the opposition to it was such that his successor as Secretary of Colonial Affairs, Antonio Maura, rescinded it, and on September 13, 1892 he restored to the University of Havana the authority to confer the doctoral degree.[76] During this period, philosophical thinkers such as Enrique José Varona and Miguel Sanguily advanced positivist thought in Cuba.[77] Periodicals like *Revista de Cuba* (1877–1884), *Revista Cubana* (1885–1895), *Hojas literarias* (1893–1894), and *El Fígaro* (1885–1912), disseminated in Cuba new ideas and forms of expression in literature.[78]

Cubans who accepted the peace settlement of 1878 became active in political parties. By 1895, there were three important political parties in Cuba: the loyalist *Partido de Unión Constitucional*, the Reformist Party (a party formed in 1893 by a splintered group from *Unión Constitucional* that advocated economic legislation favorable to the economic interests of Cuban-based entrepreneurs), and the Pa*rtido Liberal Autonomista* (that advocated home rule for Cuba under the Spanish Crown). The latter argued that although Cubans were part of the Spanish nation, they had developed a particular character of their own, and that given the distance between Cuba and Spain, the island ought to have an autonomous local government and laws that affected local issues.[79] The *programa* (platform) of the *Autonomista* Party was realistic, and the spokesmen of this

party were pragmatic. The spokesmen for the *Autonomista* Party denounced not only existing political structures and corruption in Spanish colonial administration, but also corruption in public office and the use of public office for private gain in principle.[80]

There were many prominent men in the *Autonomista* Party. Lawyers such as José María de Gálvez, Carlos Saladrigas y Domínguez, and Rafael María de Labra, intellectuals like Eliseo Giberga, and writers such as Martín Morúa Delgado.[81] Among them, the polymath Rafael Montoro stood out. Born in 1852 in Havana to a family of Spanish descent long established in Cuba, he began his education in Cuba, but at a young age he was sent to study abroad by his parents. Montoro was in Madrid in 1868, when Céspedes proclaimed the independence of Cuba. His father became suspected of supporting the uprising, and because of that he was imprisoned, and his property was confiscated. In 1878, his father died in Cuba, and Rafael Montoro returned to his homeland, never to leave again. He became involved in the foundation of the party that eventually became the *Autonomista* Party.[82]

Rafael Montoro was trained in the law, but he was a polymath, familiar with the most influential philosophical, sociological, economic, and literary trends of his time. His political views were moderate and inclusive, as he expressed them in an address to the *Junta Magna* (island-wide convention) of the *Autonomista* Party that took place at Havana on April 1, 1882.[83] According to Joan Casanovas, Rafael Montoro and other *autonomista* leaders lectured at workers' cultural centers, and provided legal assistance to workers on strike.[84] Unlike Cuban annexationists, Rafael Montoro denied that Cubans were not capable of self-rule. In an address that he gave at Madrid's Ateneo in 1894, he demanded home rule for Cuba on historical grounds, reminding his Madrid audience that in the sixteenth century Cuba and other *Reinos de Indias* had laws peculiar to their individual circumstances, and that the Spanish Crown had allowed regional freedoms in the past.[85]

Although the *Autonomista* Party did not consider opportune the independence of Cuba from Spain, belief in the political agency of Cubans was shared by all members of this party. Francisco Augusto Conte argued that Cubans had become too mature politically to be held back by a centralist government, and refuted the belief that self-government was peculiar to the Anglo-Saxon race, as was argued by Cuban annexationists.[86] Eliseo Giberga denied that Cubans needed to appeal to another nation to be governed well. He stated this view eloquently in a conference that he gave at Havana in 1887, "El pesimismo en la política cubana" ("Pessimism in Cuban Political Thought"), expressing in it his confidence in the capacity for self-government of the Cuban population, because even uneducated people in the countryside (he says, "*nuestros guajiros*"), were open to modern ideas.[87] In 1898, before the Chamber of Deputies of the Cuban Autonomous Government, José María de Gálvez declared that he would rather see "the vault of heaven" crash down than see foreign troops setting foot on Cuban soil.[88] The *Autonomista* Party was opposed to the annexation of Cuba to the United States by definition, because it advocated that Cuba remain united to Spain, the nation from where most Cubans at that time could trace their origins, wholly or in part.

Some members of the *Autonomista* Party were concerned about another war for independence in Cuba, because they feared that it could cause the intervention of the United States in Cuba. But war itself was rejected by many; because of the integration of immigrants from Spain with the Cuban-born population, a new war in Cuba was bound to be a civil war. Carlos Saladrigas expressed this concern eloquently in an address that he gave on August 9, 1880, saying, "Las glorias de la guerra … pesan sobre la conciencia. Más grandes son las glorias de la libertad que alcanzaron los pueblos verdaderamente escogidos, en el ejercicio y la defensa de sus derechos" ("Glory won at war, weighs heavily on one's conscience. Greater glory is that of freedom attained by truly chosen people in the practice and defense of their rights").[89]

José Antonio Saco was the first to talk of a Cuban nation, and he defined it according to ethnic origins, language, and culture. But, taking his statements literally, one might assume that Saco considered as Cubans only descendants of Spaniards born in Cuba. The idea of Cubanness of the *Autonomista* Party was based on Saco's, but by 1890 it had become more inclusive. Rafael María de Labra, a Cuban *autonomista* residing in Madrid, became an advocate of the complete abolition of slavery, and of full civil rights for Africans and Cubans of African descent. A book that Labra wrote against the belief that blacks are inferior to whites, bears the counterintuitive title *La brutalidad de los negros*, and historians who never bothered to read it have accused him of being a racist.[90] Far from being a racist, Labra believed that blacks had the same intellectual capacity as whites, and that white Cubans of means, who had benefited from slave labor, owed reparation to blacks in Cuba, and ought to set aside a fraction of their income from accumulated wealth derived from their exploitation, and dedicate it to improve their economic and educational status. In 1894, he published in Madrid a book where he expressed those views, saying,

> Los blancos están obligados a ocuparse de esta materia por el deber de redimir a la raza explotada, empleando en esta obra parte de los medios que aquella explotación proporcionó a los privilegiados de la ley y de la fortuna
>
> (Whites [in Cuba] are obliged to do something about this matter as a duty to redeem the exploited race, employing in this task part of the wealth that this exploitation brought to those privileged by their status before the law and their wealth).[91]

As early as 1882, Rafael Montoro advocated public education, particularly for the education of recently freed former slaves.[92] Francisco Augusto Conte advocated the inclusion of Afro-descendants in Cuban political life.[93] Eliseo Giberga wrote in his *Apuntes sobre la cuestión de Cuba* (published in 1897), that blacks in Cuba were Cubans, and that no political project could be accomplished in Cuba without black support.[94] Some members of the Junta Central (Central Committee) of the *Autonomista* Party had reservations about the inclusion of blacks in Cuban political life, but those reservations were cast aside in 1890, when the Central Committee voted in favor of demanding universal male suffrage for Cuba.[95]

Cubans in the *Autonomista* Party, and many Spaniards in the *Unión Constitucional* Party, were unhappy not only with the political situation in Cuba, and with the corruption in colonial administration, but also with economic policies of the Spanish government in Cuba. Cuban grievances concerning tariffs and access to foreign markets for Cuban exports were addressed by the Spanish Prime Minister Antonio Cánovas del Castillo in 1891 by signing an economic reciprocity treaty with the United States, opening the US market to Cuban raw sugar and tobacco leaf. But in exchange for access to US markets for Cuban raw sugar and tobacco leaf, this treaty (Foster-Cánovas) opened the Cuban market to all sorts of American manufactured and agricultural goods, some of which competed with items produced in Cuba (such as soap, beer, and shoes), and Cuban food products. Rafael Montoro criticized the Foster-Cánovas Treaty for not being really for mutual benefit and reciprocity, and for making Cuba a captive market for American manufactured goods while discriminating against Cuban manufactured tobacco (cigars, cigarettes, and snuff), and refined sugar, which Cuba had been exporting thus far to Europe and the United States.[96]

Another major economic grievance that Cubans had with the Spanish government, and one that the *Autonomista* Party expressed eloquently in its official declarations and through its spokesmen, was the servicing of the Cuban Debt. This was a war claims compensation arrangement devised in 1878 by the Banco Español and the Spanish government for the payment of property loss claims made during the war of 1868–1878 in Cuba, and other conflicts, whose pay installments were made regularly from Cuban customs receipts every year. This scheme was never cancelled by the Spanish government, although during the first months of the Cuban Autonomous Government in 1898, its renegotiation was considered.[97]

Cubans in the United States and the Cuban Revolutionary Party

Many Cubans who did not accept the peace settlement of 1878 left Cuba, and settled in the United States. In this country they joined Cubans who had left the island earlier, during the war years and since at least the time of the annexationist expeditions of Narciso López in the 1850s. Those Cubans who had settled in the United States before 1868, like Manuel de Quesada, had established roots there, and had become US citizens.[98] Some of them had embraced Anglo-Saxonism, a racial theory that had become widely accepted in the United States during the last decades of the nineteenth century which proclaimed the superiority of the "Anglo-Saxon race" (a group that was defined as including Germans, Scandinavians, the Dutch, and the English) over the "Latin race" (the Romance language speaking nations, including Spain), even when it disfavored them.

Cubans in favor of the annexation of Cuba to the United States believed that Cubans, being descended from Spaniards, were incapable of governing themselves. In their view, they were loyal to Cuba, because the best that Cubans could do for Cuba was to bring about the annexation of the island to a modernizing and

freedom-loving republic like the United States. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, Annexationism was not as strong a political force among Cuban exiles as it was in the 1850s, but it was not a dead political force. Some Cuban annexationists were wealthy, like Cristóbal Madam y Madam, and Manuel Moreno (members of the Florida state legislature) or influential, like Tomás Estrada Palma, José Ignacio Rodríguez, Juan Bellido de Luna, and Néstor Ponce de León. Tomás Estrada Palma had been elected President of the Cuban Republic in Arms in 1875, before the end of the war. Imprisoned at the Castle of Figueras, he reflected on the situation in Cuba, and became convinced that the best destiny for the island was to be annexed by the United States. After his release from prison, he settled in the United States, where he renounced Catholicism (associated in his mind with the Spanish monarchy), and became a Protestant.[99]

Despite differing about what was the best final destiny for Cuba, by 1892 most Cubans in the United States had joined the Cuban Revolutionary Party, founded in April of that year by the poet José Martí (1853–1895). The Cuban Revolutionary Party was not a political party searching to bring about its goal of Cuban independence by constitutional means in Cuba as the *Autonomista* Party sought Cuban home rule, but a political group based in the United States with the purpose of organizing and arming a new war of independence in Cuba. Martí was the undisputed leader of this group dedicated to bringing about another war of independence in Cuba. He drafted its statutes, and proposed them to leaders of Cuban communities throughout the United States, and to former officers of the Cuban Liberation Army residing in the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Jamaica, and Cuba, who joined it, and seemed to acknowledge him as *Delegado* (in context, the leader) of that party.[100]

José Martí never had anything good to say about the Spanish heritage of Cubans, even though both his parents were Spaniards.[101] He wrote about Cuban *autonomistas* dismissively, condemning them as traitors to Cuba because they sought liberties for the island in union with Spain. Although once, on March 28, 1889, José Martí wrote a letter to *The Evening Post* of Philadelphia criticizing the idea of the annexation of Cuba to the United States, he had kind and understanding words for Cuban annexationists. He wrote a letter in verse to Cuban annexationist Néstor Ponce de León telling him that he would never call an annexationist vile, because vile Cubans were those who served under the Spanish flag.[102] Martí held in high esteem Cubans settled in the United States who had become naturalized US citizens, and believed that the annexation of Cuba to their adopted country was a desirable end, just as José Ignacio Rodríguez and Tomás Estrada Palma did. He entrusted Estrada Palma with the daily operations of the Cuban Revolutionary Party in New York when he left for Cuba in early 1895. In 1892, Martí confided to Gerardo Castellanos that he did not criticize Cubans who wanted the annexation of Cuba to the United States, because that idea was a pipe dream, and because to do so might bring against him the antipathy of the government of the United States, whithout whose benevolence Cuba's independence would be difficult to obtain, and to sustain.[103]

Between 1878 and 1891, successive Spanish government administrations did not take seriously the complaints made by Cubans, and worked solely with the

deputies sent from Cuba by the loyalist Unión Constitucional Party. But in 1891, serious demonstrations by discontented sugar producers and planters in Cuba made the Spanish government realize the need for change in its economic policies affecting Cuba, and in that year, it signed the Foster-Cánovas Treaty with the United States. In 1892, the *Autonomista* Party refused to participate in political life after the government refused to implement in Cuba universal male suffrage—adopted in Spain in 1890—and in 1893, the *Unión Constitucional* Party split, and those who broke away from it—men who wanted economic reforms—founded the Reformist Party.[104] These events alerted the Spanish government to the need for political change in Cuba. It acted to redress the grievances of the *Autonomista* Party, passing in 1893 a new electoral law for Cuba so that its members went back to public life, which they did conditionally, declaring that they considered this more inclusive law a step towards universal male suffrage. Also in 1893, Spanish Secretary of Colonial Affairs (*Ministro de Ultramar*) Antonio Maura drafted a decentralization law for Cuba and Puerto Rico that gave them a local council of administration.

The *Unión Constitucional* Party opposed Maura's decentralization project, and after he resigned as Secretary of Colonial Affairs in 1894, deputies of that party in the Spanish parliament, and their supporters at the leadership of the Spanish major parties, attempted to bury it. That party had a powerful electoral machine that would have been disrupted if the six Cuban provincial deputations had been disbanded to create one single Cuban deputation, a significant element in Maura's project. More threatening for the opponents of Maura's project, however, was the unrestrained electoral model that from their perspective was going to be unleashed in Cuba and Puerto Rico by the changes that it would bring about, and would make impossible in the islands the continuation of the "*turno pacífico*" (a system of rigged elections that alternated victory in elections between the two main parties: Liberal and Conservative). Eventually, a project preserving the six provincial deputations in Cuba, but providing for a local administrative body in each island was accepted by the Spanish parliament on February 18, 1895. This reform was embodied in a law, called the Abarzuza Law because it was approved by the Spanish parliament while the Cuban-born member of the Spanish Parliament Buenaventura Abarzuza was Secretary of Colonial Affairs.[105]

It has been said that the reformist plan of Antonio Maura encouraged Cuban leaders outside of Cuba who wanted the independence of Cuba from Spain to precipitate their plans for another war of independence, lest Cubans in Cuba accepted the reforms offered by the Madrid government, and they lost the opportunity to influence the political affairs of their fatherland.[106] Indeed, on October 31, 1894, José Martí wrote from New York City to Serafín Sánchez,

> Todo ese teatro de reformas es simplemente una puñalada dirigida a nuestro corazón. ¿Por qué hemos dado tiempo a que siquiera asome? ¿Qué son mis esfuerzos y preparaciones, ni qué credito tendré después, si desperdiciamos por fallo de la acción esperada y oportuna, una situación que es hoy muy deficil de crear y es nuestra aún?

> (This farce of a reform is simply a dagger to our heart. Why have we given it time to appear? Have my efforts and preparations been in vain, what credit will I receive for them, if we waste, by failing to act as expected, a situation that will be very difficult to recreate?)[107]

The situation to which José Martí made reference in his letter to Serafín Sánchez was the economic crisis created in Cuba in 1894 by the unilateral revocation by the United States of the Foster-Cánovas treaty. Leland Hamilton Jenks said of that crisis in his book *Our Cuban Colony* that an orchestrated effort to provoke unrest in Cuban would not have been more effective than that action by the government of the United States.[108] José Martí made great efforts in 1894 to raise funds for weapons, and for two military expeditions to Cuba; one from Costa Rica to be led by Antonio Maceo, and one from the Dominican Republic, to be led by Máximo Gómez. In that year he traveled to Mexico City, and through the influence of his friend Manuel Mercado—a member of the Mexican cabinet—he had an interview with Mexican President Porfirio Díaz, from whom he requested support for the cause of Cuban independence from Spain.[109]

Early in 1895, the weapons that Martí had purchased in the United States were discovered and confiscated by US law enforcement authorities in the Florida harbor town called Fernandina. Martí was therefore compelled to improvise new plans for the expeditions to bring war to Cuba. After sending his agent in Cuba an order for simultaneous uprisings all over the island on February 24, he left the United States for the Dominican Republic to join General Gómez, leaving Tomás Estrada Palma and his young friend Gonzalo de Quesada in charge of the direction of the Cuban Revolutionary Party at its headquarters in New York City.[110]

José Martí's plans for a general insurrection did not find support among all separatist sympathizers in Cuba. Enrique José Varona, known to share his conviction that Cuba ought to become independent from Spain, traveled to New York in the summer of 1894 to dissuade him of his revolutionary plans for Cuba. Because Martí was in Mexico attempting to obtain the support of President Porfirio Díaz for his cause, Varona returned to Cuba without seeing him.[111] Manuel Sanguily had been a colonel in the Cuban Liberation Army during the war of 1868, and like many others, he had not changed his separatist convictions. But in January of 1895, when Juan Gualberto Gómez (Martí's agent in Cuba) told his brother Julio Sanguily that Martí had set the date for a separatist uprising, Manuel tried to dissuade Julio from participating in what he considered an ill-advised adventure.[112] José Martí had sent the order for the uprising from the United States to Juan Gualberto Gómez, whom he told to communicate it to other Cuban Revolutionary Party leaders in Cuba. Juan Gualberto Gómez contacted directly the leaders in Pinar del Río, Puerto Príncipe (later known as Camagüey), Matanzas, and Cuba (later known as Oriente), and only the leaders in Matanzas and Cuba told him that they were ready for an uprising. Juan Gualberto Gómez asked Dr. Pedro Betancourt, the leader of Matanzas province, to ask General Carrillo, in Las Villas province, if Las Villas was ready. Dr. Betancourt did not report to him that General Carrillo had said that Las Villas was not ready. Thus, when the day of the uprising came, February 24, only Cuba, Matanzas, and Havana were ready to rise up in rebellion.[113]

The War of Martí and the Thwarting of Reform in Cuba: 1895–1897

Several weeks after José Martí landed in eastern Cuba, a reporter for the *New York Herald* went to meet him. There, in the fields of eastern Cuba, on May 5, 1898, Martí wrote a letter to the *New York Herald* stating that Cuban separatists wanted to open Cuba to trade and investments from abroad that were currently being kept out by Spain.[114] On May 18, Martí wrote a letter to his Mexican friend Manuel Mercado (who was minister in the Cabinet of President Porfirio Díaz), accusing Cubans in the *Autonomista* Party of harboring plans for the annexation of Cuba by the United States, and making reference to the expansionistic tendencies of the latter, which he calls a monster inside of whose entrails he had lived.[115] The different perspectives towards the United States presented by these letters to two different recipients makes the historian wonder whether the letter to Mercado was not meant for the ear of President Díaz, who did not like the United States, and whose support for Cuba's independence Martí sought. The contents of the letter to the *New York Herald* is consistent with the opinions expressed by Martí in his letter to Gerardo Castellanos of August 4, 1892. What Martí had in his mind (and why he wrote those letters expressing such contrasting views of the United States within two weeks from each other) will never be known with certainty, because he died on May 19, 1895, the day after he wrote to Mercado. It is possible that the contents of his letter to the *New York Herald* were read and misunderstood by the anonymous author of a letter published by the newspaper *El Comercio* of San Francisco on March 1896, who asserted that Cuban separatists in New York, Martí included, had been concerting for years with US investors in order to obtain financial support for an uprising in Cuba, and that in exchange they had been promised financial privileges after Spain was out of Cuba.[116]

José Martí had said that the new war for the independence of Cuba was going to be brief and civilized. Before leaving the Dominican Republic for Cuba with General Máximo Gómez, he drafted a document called "Manifesto de Montecristi," where the two men promised that their intent was not to bring destruction and death to Cuba, but to bring freedom to all its inhabitants from the oppression of the Spanish government, offering protection to all those who joined the separatist movement and renounced their allegiance to Spain.[117] After the death of José Martí, the war conducted by generals Gómez and Maceo was not civilized. They used scorched earth tactics, and the resources put by the Spanish government to fight them made for a long war. Martí was successful, however, in thwarting the reform movement in the Spanish parliament, because the uprising in Cuba was used by the reactionary elements there as an excuse to halt the implementation of the reforms voted in February 1895 for Cuba and Puerto Rico. Deputies in the Spanish parliament who voted for the Abarzuza Law were embarrassed by its opponents, who questioned their patriotism, and compelled them to accept the end of the revolt in Cuba and peace in the island as a precondition to the implementation of that Law in Cuba and in Puerto Rico.[118]

In the beginning, the war did not go well for the separatists. Only Havana, Matanzas, and eastern Cuba rose up in arms, and the uprisings in Havana and

Matanzas were suppressed. On March 10, Cuban separatist leader Calixto García, at that time exiled in Madrid, wrote a letter to Gonzalo de Quesada where he expressed his fear that the uprising of February 1895 might end like that of 1879. But the separatist rebels in eastern Cuba held on, encouraged by Bartolomé Masó, who rejected the advice to surrender from a delegation of members of the *Autonomista* Party. Governor Enrique Calleja placed Cuba under a state of emergency, suspending civil rights, but he listened to the pleadings of the *autonomistas* not to provoke a bloodbath, and to bring the rebels to reason peacefully. Thus he failed to crush the rebellion when it had been weakened, before the arrival of generals Gómez and Maceo.

The arrival of the expedition from Costa Rica with General Antonio Maceo, and that from the Dominican Republic led by General Máximo Gómez, whom José Martí accompanied, changed the fortunes of the war dramatically. The generals organized the rebels in eastern Cuba, and began to conduct daring raids, and to win military encounters with the royal army. José Martí died in one on those encounters, on May 19. The separatist armed forces sent delegates to meet at Jimaguayú, where they drafted a constitution.[119] They also established a civil government of the Cuban Republic in Arms, and elected as President a veteran of the Ten Years War, Salvador Cisneros Betancourt, Marquis of Santa Lucía. But General Gómez became "de facto" politico-military leader of the insurrection, disregarding the directives sent to him by the civil government when he saw fit.[120] Generals Gómez and Maceo began an offensive that was meant to bring war to all Cuba, from east to west, destroying all property that they could not carry with them.

The purpose of the invasion of western Cuba was partly to encourage separatist Cubans throughout the island to join the Cuban Liberation Army. The blood and fire tactics were meant to discourage Spain from resisting the uprising, by making Cuba an economically unproductive possession, and to inspire terror in the inhabitants of the Cuban countryside and non-garrisoned towns who were not favorable to their cause. Most people are familiar with images of desolation in Cuba brought about after 1896 by the "Reconcentración" decreed by Spanish governor Valeriano Weyler, but in 1895 the Cuban magazine *El Fígaro* carried graphic evidence of the destruction caused in the Cuban countryside by the insurrectionists, who brought about the concentration in Cuban towns of people from the countryside whose homes and plantings had been destroyed by them. *New York Herald* reporter George Bronson Rea left a gripping account of the terroristic tactics of the Cuban insurgents in his book *Facts and Fakes about Cuba*, published in New York in 1897.[121] Success by the force of arms encouraged those undecided to support the separatist war. Men previously wary of rising up in arms, such as Manuel Sanguily and Enrique José Varona, were carried away by the successes of the Cuban Liberation Army. In 1896, they wrote (from exile in the United States) newspaper articles and booklets praising the foresight of José Martí.[122]

The war by fire and sword launched by generals Gómez and Maceo was not answered in kind by Arsenio Martínez Campos, the first Spanish general sent to confront them, and his lack of military success brought about the appointment of

a successor to him with orders for repression. General Valeriano Weyler arrived in Cuba in February 1896 ready to answer the tactics of Gómez and Maceo with brutalities of his own. After General Weyler's arrival in Cuba in February 1896, he ordered the resettlement of the rural population into urban settlements through a series of resettlement decrees (*bandos de reconcentración*) with the purpose of depriving the rebels of the assistance of sympathizers in the countryside. General Weyler did not make the necessary provisions to house and feed those resettled in towns, although fields around the towns were provided for the resettled people to grow their own food. While Weyler did not invent the concentration camp, the resettlement of the rural population in Cuban towns without provisions brought about hunger, disease, and death for thousands of people. The resettlement was not an ethnic cleansing genocide, because it included anyone in the Cuban countryside regardless of their place of birth, and it was not intended to kill the resettled population; nevertheless, it had horrific results in human suffering and loss of lives—to which the insurgents contributed when they raided and burned the cultivation fields around towns assigned to resettled people, and when they attacked and raided food provisioning convoys on their way to towns full of resettled people.[123]

Excesses in the repression of rebels and the deaths by famine and disease caused by the resettlement policy decreed by General Weyler were widely reported in the United States by Cubans favorable to the independence of Cuba from Spain; by those who wanted the United States to annex Cuba; and by Americans who wanted a war with Spain to acquire her colonies. Reporters such as George Bronson Rea, who tried to elucidate the complexities of the conflict in Cuba, found a less favorable audience than sensationalist reporters, like those writing for the New York newspaper *The Journal*.[124]

Spain Grants Home Rule: The Cuban Autonomous Government of 1898

Although Cuban official history says that in 1898 the Cuban separatists were winning their struggle against the Spanish government and the Cubans loyal to it, authors such as Hugh Thomas and John Lawrence Tone have concluded that this was not the case. Luis Navarro García has argued convincingly that the separatists were losing in 1898, before the United States made certain its intentions to intervene in Cuba.[125] The situation of the rebels was weakened in November 1897, when Spain granted home rule to Cuba and Puerto Rico, because at that point a considerable number of soldiers and some officers in the Cuban Liberation Army left the separatist camp. Judging from documents such as the *Diario de campaña* of Generalissimo Gómez, and the account of the campaign of Major General García by his assistant Aníbal Escalante Beaton, the Cuban Liberation Army was not winning in February 1898. Gómez wrote in his *Diario de campaña* on February 28, 1898 that after the desertion of 17 men the group under his command had been reduced to 30 men; Escalante Beaton says that on February 19, 1898 Calixto García and his followers saw in the sinking of the USS *Maine* and the US intervention that it portended a selfish hope for the

Cuban separatist cause.[126] Expectation that the United States was going to intervene in Cuba to give victory to the separatists after the April 19 joint resolution of the US Congress telling Spain to leave Cuba immediately, may be assumed to be the reason why new recruits began appearing in Cuban insurgent camps in April 1898, and that in some units the number of soldiers who joined during the period of American involvement outnumbered that of soldiers who had joined before.[127] Given the guerrilla tactics used by the Cuban Liberation it is difficult to judge when they withdrew tactically, and when they were routed. As George Bronson Rea said in 1897, "You cannot lick a man if he runs away from you all the time."[128] But it is reasonable to deduce from the eagerness of the Cuban separatist leaders to welcome unconditionally the armed intervention of the United States in Cuba in the spring of 1898 that they did not believe to be on the brink of sacking Spain from Cuba at that point in time.

Separatist leaders reacted swiftly to the decrees granting home rule and the implementation of universal male suffrage in Cuba that were issued in November 1897. On November 27, Generalissimo Gómez issued a *bando* condemning to death anyone who found acceptable the home rule granted by Spain or who proposed it as an honorable option for Cubans. On December 24, Major General Calixto García issued a proclamation declaring the members of the Junta Autonomista of Santiago de Cuba to be traitors (and hence, according to the laws of the civil government of the Cuban Republic in Arms, guilty of treason and liable to be punished by death).

On January 1, 1898, a Cuban Autonomous Government was inaugurated. At that point, it consisted of a cabinet that administered Cuba with the Spanish Governor. Presiding over this cabinet was José María Gálvez, a lawyer who had been the President of the *Autonomista* Party since its inception in 1878. Its members were prominent members of the *Autonomista* Party and of the Reformist Party: Antonio Govín was Secretary of Justice and Government; Rafael Montoro was Secretary of the Economy; Francisco Zayas was Secretary of Education; Eduardo Dolz was Secretary of Public Works and Transportation; and Laureano Rodríguez was Secretary of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce. Two Afro-Cubans, Juan Lacerda and Vicente Portas, were staff members in the Department (*Secretaría*) of Public Works and Communications.[129] In March of that year, an electoral law more inclusive than the provisions for elections of an autonomous government indicated in the November 1897 autonomy decree was issued.[130] The Chamber of Deputies of the Cuban Autonomous Government went into session after elections held in March of 1898 in Cuban towns, implementing the universal male suffrage granted to Cuba in November 1897, together with home rule. Of those elections, historian Rebecca Scott said, "though the disruptions of war rendered these late electoral rights largely moot, the establishment of integrated electoral lists in itself established precedents for the postward period."[131]

Cuban separatists never controlled any town for more than a few hours. As soon as they heard that government troops were sent to retake them, they left the towns that they managed to take, and often they looted and burned them, as they did in Velasco, Tunas, Guáimaro, and Guisa.[132] That the Cuban Autonomous Government was not a phantom government is supported by what Calixto

García, leader of the Cuban Liberation Army in eastern Cuba, wrote about it to Domingo Méndez Capote, Vice-President of the civil government of the Cuban Republic in Arms, in a letter dated May 1, 1898. In that letter, General García says, "There is a group of Cubans who are with Spain who have a government with elected chambers, better than what we have."[133] On April 14, 1898 the Cabinet of the Cuban Autonomous Government named an official commission to negotiate peace with the separatist leaders. According to French sources, the commission had the authorization from the Spanish government to form a Cuban commission with members from both sides of the conflict that would include the civil government of the Cuban Republic in Arms, and officers of the Cuban Liberation Army.[134]

Neither the civil government of the Cuban Republic in Arms nor the chief leaders of the Cuban Liberation Army (supreme general Máximo Gómez and his subaltern in command in eastern Cuba, Major General Calixto García) were willing to talk to the negotiators sent to them by the Cabinet of the Cuban Autonomous Government. Quite the opposite: on October 29, 1897, 22 delegates of the Cuban Liberation Army met at La Yaya to draft a new constitution, and formed a new civil government of the Cuban Republic in Arms, with General Bartolomé Masó as President, and Dr. Domingo Méndez Capote as Vice-President.[135]

According to Horatio Rubens, a US lawyer attached to the Cuban Revolutionary Party, after war broke out between the United States and Spain in April 1898, General Ramón Blanco (the governor of Cuba) wrote a letter to Gómez saying:

> Spaniards and Cubans, we find ourselves now facing a foreigner of different race, of natural absorbing tendencies … I propose … an alliance of both armies in the city of Santa Clara. The Cubans will receive the arms of the Spanish army and, at the cry of "Hurrah for Spain!" and "Hurrah for Cuba!" we will repel the invader and we will liberate from a foreign yoke the descendants of a common people.

To this letter, Gómez replied,

> (You say we belong to the same race, and invite me to fight against a foreign invader … I only know one race, humanity, and for me there exist only good nations and bad. Spain has been bad here, and the United States carry out for Cuba a duty of humanity and civilization … I have written to President McKinley and General Miles thanking them for the American Intervention in Cuba).[136]

Enrique Collazo, an officer in the Cuban Liberation Army, also quotes that fateful letter exchange in his memoir of the war independence of 1895 and the US intervention of 1898, *Los Americanos en Cuba* (Havana, 1905), saying that Blanco's proposal should have been discussed by the civil government of the Cuban Republic in Arms before accepting, unconditionally, the armed intervention of the United States in Cuba.[137]

In most general histories of Cuba, the Cuban Autonomous Government is not mentioned at all, or it is dismissed as something that existed on paper only. The reports sent from Havana by the American consul from 1896 to 1898, General Fitzhugh Lee, and an article by this gentleman published in several US magazines in 1898, are sometimes cited to attest its practical inexistence or irrelevance.[138] But once one knows General Lee's personal interest in the military intervention and occupation of Cuba by the United States one becomes wary of his reliability as an impartial witness. He expressed sympathy for Cuban independence to Cubans, and he took up the cause of Cubans who were US citizens imprisoned in Cuba because of their activities in support of the separatist armed forces, but in his personal correspondence with US Secretary of State Richard Olney, he wrote that Cubans were not capable of self-government, and that the United States should intervene in Cuba, and keep it. This duplicity casts doubts about his reliability as an impartial reporter on the Cuban Autonomous Government, and the prospects for a victory of the loyalist side in Cuba. The success of the Cuban Autonomous Government was not what Lee wanted. Neither the victory of the Cuban separatists, but the intervention of the United States in Cuba, and its eventual annexation of the island.[139]

Another contemporary source, José Ignacio Rodríguez (1831–1907), gives an evaluation of the Cuban Autonomous Government diametrically opposed to that of General Lee. In his *Estudio histórico sobre el origen, desenvolvimiento y manifestaciones prácticas de la idea de la anexión de la Isla de Cuba a los Estados Unidos*, published at Havana in 1900, Rodríguez says:

> Que el régimen autonómico estuvo en perfecto vigor en Cuba hasta que en 1º de enero de 1899 se izó sobre el Palacio del Gobernador General la bandera de los Estados Unidos de América es un hecho histórico que nadie puede disputar un momento. Todos sus actos oficiales están impresos.
>
> (That the autonomous government was functioning in Cuba until January 1, 1899, when the American flag was raised over the governor general's palace, is a historic fact that cannot be denied. All its official acts were published.)[140]

Indeed, the proceedings of the deliberations of the cabinet, and the legislature of the Cuban Autonomous Government are housed in the *Archivo Nacional de Cuba*, at Havana. In 1992, those documents were microfilmed for the University of Salamanca, and they are now available in microfilm at the library of that university.[141]

It is probable that if the United States had not intervened in Cuba in 1898, some sort of settlement would have been reached between the Madrid government, the Cuban Autonomous Government, and the Cuban Liberation Army. Tomás Estrada Palma admitted as much to Gonzalo de Quesada in a letter, saying,

> Resuelta España a aniquilar con Weyler el país y sus habitantes, el oscuro aspecto que presentaba por entonces la segunda guerra de independencia, lejos de ofrecer signos de esperanzas presagiaba más bien el final desgraciado de la epopeya de los 10 años

(Having Spain decided to have Weyler destroy Cuba and the Cubans, the scenario presented at that time by the second war of independence, far from hopeful, portended the hapless end of the Ten Years War).[142]

C. A. M. Hennessy summarized the behavior in 1898 of Generalissimo Gómez, Major General García, and the civil government of the Cuban Republic in Arms when he wrote, "Cuban separatists lost touch with political reality, and were prepared to devastate the island and so create the conditions for US intervention rather than accept reform from Spain."[143] According to Enrique Bacardí Moreau in his *Crónicas de Santiago de Cuba*, General Antonio Maceo had rejected a toast for the annexation of Cuba to the United States made by a young Cuban at a dinner in his honor that took place in that city during his visit in July 1890, saying, "Creo joven, aunque me parece imposible, que ese sería el único caso, en que tal vez estaría yo al lado de los españoles" ("I think, young man, that such improbable occasion would be the only moment when I might be on the side of the Spaniards").[144] But Maceo was dead in 1898, and, as Enrique Collazo said, Gómez and the civil government of the Cuban Republic in Arms decided to ignore the overtures made to them by Spain and the Cuban Autonomous Government, seemingly expecting disinterested aid to their cause from the United States.

Cuban *autonomistas* were loyal to Spain to the end, but they considered themselves Cuban. Although the Cabinet of the Cuban Autonomous Government continued administering the government of the island with the Spanish Governor General, and its elected local government officers (such as city majors and councilmen) continued performing their duties until the end of Spanish sovereignty in Cuba on January 1, 1899, the Cuban Automous Government assemblies dissolved after the Spanish government surrendered eastern Cuba to the United States by the armistice of August 1898, and on August 31, 1898 the *Autonomista* Party dissolved as well. Eliseo Giberga articulated the sentiments of his fellow *autonomistas* in a long essay that he published at Havana on January 17, 1899, stating how, once Spain had surrended its sovereignty over Cuba, they advocated the total independence of Cuba as the only way left to preserve Cubanness.[145]

Long Gestation of a 14-Week War: Cuba and the United States in the Nineteenth Century

Reports of Spanish atrocities in Cuba since 1895 in US newspapers had developed ill feeling towards Spain in this country. When the USS *Maine* blew up at Havana harbor on February 15, most US citizens were willing to believe that the ship had been blown up by Spaniards. The willingness of the US government to go to war over Cuba in 1898 seems to have surprised the Spanish government. But it should not have, because successive administrations of the United States had coveted Cuba, and several times during the nineteenth century, some Cubans had expressed desire for the annexation of Cuba to this nation.

The declaration made on December 2, 1823 by US President James Monroe to the effect that the United States would not tolerate the expansion of European

powers in the Americas, known as the Monroe Doctrine, was the US government's reaction to a proposal made by British Secretary of Foreign Affairs George Canning to the US Ambassador in London earlier that year, to the effect that Great Britain and the United States ought to make a joint declaration addressed to the European continental powers, objecting to their intervention in the Americas in order to assist Spain to reconquer her emancipated domains, and making a mutual renunciation to occupy the island of Cuba.[146] John Quincy Adams, US Secretary of State at that time, thought that the United States ought not to agree to the British proposal on account of its including a mutual renunciation by Great Britain and the United States to occupy Cuba, because he believed that on account of Cuba's position at the entrance of the Gulf of Mexico, near the mouth of the Mississippi River, it ought to be sooner or later part of the United States.[147] After consulting with older statesmen, such as former President Thomas Jefferson, President Monroe followed the advice of his Secretary of State, and issued the declaration that we now know, warning continental European powers to keep their hands off the American continent, conscious that Great Britain wanted the same, and that the British Navy would enforce what he declared to be the will of the United States.[148] This background to Monroe's declaration was not known to his contemporaries in Spanish America. It was considered a novelty in 1893 when Havana University professor José María Céspedes published in Havana his book *La docrina de Monroe*, with the purpose of disabusing his compatriots' belief that the United States was the nurturing eldest sister of the free nations of the Americas, and explaining that the Monroe Doctrine was a unilateral statement by a US President with no actual force in international law, and motivated by self-interest.[149]

US historian George Bancroft wrote his multi-volume history of the United States for it to serve as the light of the world, as a model to all nations struggling to be free, presumably the Spanish American republics included.[150] In the 1830s, however, American scholars began to think of an American exceptionalism, based on the influence of the land in humans. The term "manifest destiny" was coined in the United States in the 1840s by the Irish American resident of New Orleans, John O'Sullivan, who believed in the God-made plan for this country to possess all North America from ocean to ocean.[151] He believed in the greatness of the United States as a nation and of its institutions—perhaps also in the superiority of Protestant Christianity—but he said nothing of a chosen "stock" in the ethnic mosaic that the United States had become by the middle of the nineteenth century. John O'Sullivan was a supporter of the expeditions of General López to Cuba in 1850 and in 1851, and so were other southerners who wanted to annex Cuba and make it a slave state.[152] The culmination of those early nineteenth-century attempts to bring about the annexation of Cuba by the United States took place in 1854, when President John Pierce charged his ambassador to Spain, Pierre Soulé, to propose to the Spanish government the purchase of Cuba. Soulé and his counterparts in Great Britain and France met in the Belgian city of Ostend to draft a statement of justification for this action that after becoming public was known as "The Ostend Manifesto." But this US proposal to purchase

Cuba from Spain was rejected by Spain, and brought about strong official statements of opposition from the foreign offices of Great Britain and France.[153]

The association of being American with belonging to a specific ethnic group became institutionalized at Johns Hopkins University in the 1880s, where Herbert Baxter Adams published his essay on the Germanic origin of New England town councils.[154] It is difficult to assess how widespread in the population of the United States the belief in a superior "Anglo-Saxon race" of nativists was, but the popular children's encyclopedia *The Book of Knowledge* told American children that Germany shared the same Teutonic stock with England and America.[155] Members of the eastern states elites did, when it began to be taught at Harvard and Columbia. The glorification of the English, the Dutch, the Germans, and the Scandinavians by historians at those universities usually went hand-in-hand with disdain for southern Europeans. One can argue that Francis Parkman (1823–1893), in his history of European settlements and conquests in North America, represents the English in America as superior to the French because of their racial stock.[156]

Anglo-Saxonism was an expansionist worldview, because it considered the will to conquer a racial trait of the Anglo-Saxon people whom it idolized. Just as the racialist theories of Anglo-Saxonism began to be taught at Harvard University and at Columbia University in the 1880s, a book was published in the United States that excited expansionist ambitions among educated elites in its eastern seaboard states to a level comparable to that of manifest destiny in the southern states during the 1840s and 1850s.[157] In 1890, retired US Navy Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan published T*he Influence of Sea Power upon History*, a book that became a best-seller, because of its conclusions: a suggestion to the United States about what its future course should be concerning armament and foreign policy.[158] Several months after the publication of this book, in December 1890, Mahan published an article in the influential *Atlantic Monthly* that left no doubt about his message to the government and the financial leaders of the United States.

In "The United States Looking Outward," Mahan predicts an approaching change in the thoughts and policy of Americans as to their relations with the world outside, because while previously producers (the employer and the workman alike) had been concerned only about the intrusion of the foreign producer upon the US market, people such as US Secretary of State James G. Blaine (1830–1893) were looking at opportunities for Americans to sell their products abroad. Shrewdly, he highlights the association between the theory about the influence of sea power in history that he had expounded in his book, and the importance of distant markets and the relations to them of the powers of production of the United States. In this article, Mahan foresees that world trade routes were going to change dramatically once the canal across Panama that was being dug at the time was completed, and he warns the United States of the importance for its interests of islands in the Caribbean held at that time by what he calls weak or unstable states. Mahan asks, "Is the United States willing to see them sold to a powerful rival? But what right will she invoke against the transfer? She can allege but one—that of her reasonable policy supported by her might."[159]

Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge studied at Harvard University, where they were influenced by historians with an Anglo-Saxonist perspective. In 1890 they became enthralled by Mahan and his theories on sea power, and embraced his suggestions about the importance of the United States constructing a big navy. Theodore Roosevelt was the scion of a wealthy New York family of Dutch ancestry. He was proud of his Anglo-Saxon heritage, and in 1889 began writing his epic of the creation of an empire of liberty in the United States, the four-volume *The Winning of the West*.[160] After reading Mahan's work, Roosevelt became a promoter of the creation of a new navy, bigger and more modern. In 1897 President McKinley made him Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and from that position he sent a memo to Commodore George Dewey, commander of the US Navy Pacific Fleet, ordering him to head for Hong Kong, and to wait there for the beginning of war with Spain. Henry Cabot Lodge (1850–1924) became Senator in the Congress of the United States for the state of Massachusetts, and from his position in the US Senate promoted the construction of a modern and powerful navy. When the separatist war began in Cuba in 1895, supporters of Cuban independence in the US Senate proposed to grant to the Cuban rebels *belligerency* status, which would have legitimized their cause. Henry Cabot Lodge was unsure about the capacity of the Cuban separatists to rule their country, and preferred to observe the course of events. He was more inclined to US intervention in Cuba without commitments to the Cubans. Roosevelt and Cabot Lodge saw the rebellion in Cuba and the inability of Spain to suppress it as an opportunity for the United States to impose order in a land where political disorder was causing the destruction of property owned by American citizens.[161]

In the summer of 1895, a dispute broke out between Venezuela and Great Britain concerning the border between the former and the British colony of Guiana, and the Venezuelan government requested the United States to intervene, by appealing to the Monroe Doctrine. On July 20, US Secretary of State Richard Olney, with President Grover Cleveland's approval, sent an aggressive note to the British government, arguing that the Monroe Doctrine gave the United States the right to intervene in boundary conflicts in the Americas, and demanding that Britain submit the disputed territory to arbitration.[162] The British government submitted to this demand, and although the decision taken by the United States as arbitrator was favorable to Great Britain, this action was perceived as a tacit surrender of British hegemony in the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico area to the United States. After the Venezuelan crisis, many in the United States began to call for intervention in Cuba. Former Confederate army officer turned politician Fitzhugh Lee, appointed US General Consul at Havana in June 1896, was one of those who wanted that intervention to take place.[163]

It seems that President Grover Cleveland thought that Spain would be able to weaken the separatist rebellion if it granted home rule to the Cubans. On April 4, 1896, Richard Olney, his Secretary of State, dispatched a note to the Spanish government, offering the mediation of the United States with the Cuban separatists in order to bring about an end to the war on the basis of Spain granting Cubans home rule.[164] But Spanish Prime Minister Antonio Cánovas del Castillo did not accept this friendly offer of mediation.

The presidential election of November 1896 in the United States was won by the candidate of the Republican Party, William McKinley. Some Republicans thought that Cuba ought to be independent, and had proposed granting Cuban rebels the belligerency status. But Republicans such as Henry Cabot Lodge and Theodore Roosevelt thought that the United States ought to intervene militarily in Cuba without commitments to the Cubans.[165] President McKinley delivered his first presidential message in December 1897, where he encouraged Spain to give home rule to Cubans, but warned that if after Spain did so the war did not end, the United States would intervene in Cuba in the name of humanity to stop the violations of human rights by both sides in the island.[166] President McKinley left General Fitzhugh Lee as US General consul at Havana, despite being warned by Cleveland about his being one of the ringleaders of the annexationist Americans in Cuba, and Lee continued encouraging the Cuban separatists to fight until the United States would intervene, and sending reports to Washington about Spanish incapacity to end the war, and the failure of home rule before it was granted.[167]

Antonio Cánovas del Castillo was murdered in August 1897 by an anarchist sent his way by a Puerto Rican agent of the Cuban separatists in Europe.[168] Práxedes Mateo Sagasta, the leader of the Liberal Party in Spain became Prime Minister, and he began a new policy in Cuba. First, he recalled General Weyler and sent to Cuba General Ramón Blanco with the charge to carry a policy of conciliation. In November 1897, the Queen Regent of Spain, María Cristina of Austria, issued a decree granting home rule to Cuba and Puerto Rico, and the decree implementing universal male suffrage, as mentioned above.[169] It is possible that those political concessions to Cubans were made in order to avoid a conflict with the United States, by ending the repressive policy implemented by General Weyler and granting home rule, as suggested by presidents Cleveland and McKinley in the recent past, but it also reflected the fact that since 1896 there had been in the Spanish parliament increasing criticism of the repression policy of Antonio Cánovas del Castillo by the Republicans and other parties in the opposition.[170]

If Sagasta's intent in ending repression and allowing political change in Cuba was to keep the United States from intervening in Cuba, then his policy backfired. On January 11, 1898, after demonstrations against a Havana newspaper that had criticized General Weyler turned into a riot, Consul Lee, who continued sending reports to Washington announcing the failure of Cuban home rule, asked that US warships be sent to Cuba to protect US citizens in the island. That is how the USS *Maine* arrived at the harbor in Havana on January 25, 1898.[171] It did not matter that Governor Blanco restored order in Havana promptly, and that the establishment of the Cuban Autonomous Government proceeded unimpeded by the Spanish *voluntarios* and the *Unión Constitucional* Party movers and shakers. In June 1898, Lee published in the United States an article where he advocated the military intervention of the United States in Cuba.[172]

In March of 1898, US Minister (diplomat of a lesser rank than ambassador) in Madrid Stewart L. Woodford asked Spanish Minister of Colonial Affairs

Segismund Moret whether Spain was ready to sell Cuba if a purchase offer came from the United States. Although Spain was a constitutional monarchy, decisions concerning the cession of Spanish territory had to be approved by the monarch, and Queen Regent María Cristina let it be known that she preferred to abdicate her regency and return to her native Austria rather than be the instrument of selling Cuba.[173] Thus, an arrangement between Spain and the United States over Cuba similar to that between Imperial Russia and the United States over Alaska in 1867 did not take place. After the incident mentioned above, any illusion that the Sagasta administration may have had about the US government's interest in Cuba being motivated solely by humanitarian concerns, and not by the desire to acquire the island, was disabused.

The Spanish government tried to bring about a coalition of European powers to impress on the United States that a war with Spain might have negative consequences, and the cooperation of the Queen Regent was engaged in this effort.[174] Emperor Franz Joseph of Austria-Hungary, responding to the appeal from his relative the Queen Regent of Spain, asked the Foreign Minister of Austria-Hungary to propose to other European powers the formation of a collective representation to the United States expressing their objection to an unprovoked war against Spain.[175] The Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister approached his German and Russian counterparts arguing for monarchical solidarity with Spain. He approached the English and French arguing that a victory of the United States in Cuba would make it a rising colonial power and their rival in the Caribbean.

France seemed favorably inclined towards the Spanish position in Cuba, but Great Britain and Germany undermined the Austro-Hungarian initiative. During the morning of April 6, 1898, the ambassadors of Great Britain, Germany, France, Austro-Hungary, Russia and Italy, met with President McKinley. They presented a statement, drafted by British Ambassador Sir Julian Pauncefote, urging an appeal to the feelings of humanity and moderation of the President of the American people in their existing differences with Spain. President McKinley read a reply which, after referring to the desire of the United States for peace, spoke of the need to fulfill a duty to humanity by ending an insufferable situation in Cuba. Unbeknownst to his fellow diplomats Ambassador Pauncefote had submitted the first draft of his statement to the US Department of State, and had assured President McKinley that Great Britain did not intend to oppose the United States in its differences with Spain.[176]

On April 11, 1898, President McKinley delivered a message where he implicitly demanded that Spain leave Cuba. On that very day, Austria-Hungary tried again to arouse European powers to present resistance to the humiliation of Spain. The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador in the United States sounded out his colleagues of the five European powers mentioned above as to presenting a joint note urging peace with Spain to the US government. On April 14, they met at the British Embassy to consider what action to take. Ambassador Pauncefote presented them a draft of a note which he proposed they deliver to the US Secretary of State. It is said that the French Ambassador, Jules Cambon, suggested a number of revisions, including the insertion of a phrase stating that the

intervention of the United States in Cuba was unjustified. The German Ambassador questioned the proposed procedure, and at his suggestion the six ambassadors decided to recommend that each of their governments would send an identical note to the US envoy accredited to it. They prepared a dispatch that stated that their approval could not be given to an armed intervention which did not appear to them to be justified. This proposed communication, unlike the collective note of April 6, was critical of the United States. But neither the British Prime Minister nor the German Emperor approved sending it.[177]

By 1898 the United States had become industrialized and its merchant marine conducted trade throughout the world. After the Venezuela border dispute of 1896, Great Britain had conceded to it supremacy in the Caribbean region, and sought an Anglo-American alliance in the Pacific to stop German colonial ambitions there. Germany did not want to criticize the United States, lest doing so might offend the rising power and throw it into an Anglo-American alliance. France had sympathy for Spain, but it would not take Spain's cause alone. Thus, there was no European opposition to the United States taking Cuba from Spain in 1898 like the concerted Franco-British opposition to its purchase of the island from Spain in 1854.[178] According to Julián Cortés Cavanillas, after the failure of the second Austro-Hungarian attempt to an European accord to prevent the United States from humiliating Spain, Emperor Franz Joseph said, "Europe is no more."[179]

The War of the United States of America with Spain over Cuba in 1898 and its Aftermath

The war of the United States with Spain began after the joint resolution of the US Congress passed on April 19, 1898, which demanded Spain leave Cuba at once, and declared that it was the will of the United States to occupy the island. This declaration included an amendment made by Senator Teller stating that Cubans were independent, that Cuba ought to be independent, and that the United States would leave the island after it had been pacified and Cubans were ready for independence. But the armed forces of the United States disembarked in Cuba only in June 1898, two months after its Pacific Fleet had begun war with Spain in the Philippine Islands (although the reason given to declare war against the Kingdom of Spain was to end the oppression and disorder in Cuba, not the Philippines). On May 1, a delegation of the government of the United States had visited Major General Calixto García, the commander of the Cuban Liberation Army in eastern Cuba, to ask for the assistance of the Cuban separatist army in the war against Spain. One of the members of that delegation, Lieutenant Andrew Rowan, carried a telegram from Tomás Estrada Palma, José Martí's successor as *Delegado* (head) of the Cuban Revolutionary Party. At that meeting, Major General García agreed to support the armed intervention of the United States in Cuba, and suggested that the US Army land in Cuba at an ungarded site in the south coast of eastern Cuba called Daiquirí. At that meeting García did not ask for belligerence status as a condition for the assistance requested by the delegation sent by the President of the United States or for a formal assurance that

the United States was going to give to Cubans the independence that they had been fighting to wrest from Spain. General García seemed to be content with the vague wording of the "Teller Amendment" to the US Congress joint resolution giving President McKinley war powers to go to war against the Kingdom of Spain, and he promised his support and that of the Cuban Liberation Army forces under his command to the US armed forces unconditionally. Admiral William T. Sampson, in a letter of June 16, 1898 to the Secretary of the Navy, refers to a letter from Major General García to the American General Miles assuring that officer that he regarded his wishes and suggestions as orders.[180]

With the assistance of the Cuban Liberation Army, the US Army laid siege to Santiago de Cuba from June 22 until July 16. But it was the sinking of the Spanish fleet by US warships on July 3 that made the situation of Spain untenable. General Toral, the Spanish commander in Santiago de Cuba, capitulated on July 17. In the terms of capitulation he surrendered all of eastern Cuba, and he gave orders to all Spanish armed forces commanders in that region to surrender to US armed forces. On August 12, an armistice was agreed upon by the US government and the government of Spain. Disregarding this armistice as a cessation of hostilities, US naval forces proceeded to invade and occupy Puerto Rico after that date. Approving the Teller Amendment to the Joint Resolution of April 19, 1898, both chambers of the Congress of the United States declared that (1) Cuba was (and ought to be) independent, and (2) that the intervention that they approved was not for territorial conquests. But in fact, the war of the United States with Spain over Cuba was inter-continental and expansionistic.

An interesting development took place in Cuba after the Spanish royalist army surrendered. The General commanding the US forces at Santiago agreed not to let the Cuban Liberation Army soldiers enter the city with the US forces who took command over it. Furthermore, US Army and US Navy officers at Santiago fraternized with fellow officers in the Spanish army, and stayed aloof from those in the Cuban Liberation Army, once they were allowed to enter in Santiago.[181] US participants in this war that had been fought over the oppression of Cubans by Spain, such as Theodore Roosevelt (who went to Cuba as a soldier in the volunteer brigade called The Rough Riders), and George Kennan, wrote memoirs where they dismissed the armed support given by Cubans to the US Army in Cuba.[182] In 1945, the Congress of the Republic of Cuba passed a law officially adopting the name of Spanish-Cuban-American War for that conflict, but facts cannot be dismissed by decree.[183] Rather than supporting the Cuban war of independence begun in 1895, the intervention of the United States in 1898 was a war of military conquest against Spain.[184] At no point before or after the intervention did the US government acknowledge either the civil government of the Cuban Republic in Arms or the Cuban Liberation Army as representatives of the Cuban people. By ignoring the institutions that represented an independent Cuba, the US government denied their legitimacy, and assumed the role of hegemon in Cuba once Spain surrendered its sovereignty over the island.

The Legacy of Spain

When people ask about the legacy of Spain in Cuba, the common response is oppression and corruption. The stern look of Captain General Valeriano Weyler is evoked as the predecessor of "butcher" Presidents of the Republic, such as General Machado (ironically, Machado was a general of the Cuban Liberation Army who fought Weyler). The United States claimed that it went to war with Spain to liberate Cuba from Spanish oppression. But perhaps that popular image of the corrupt oppressor should be reconsidered, because by the time the Americans landed in Cuba, General Weyler had been gone for nine months, and Cuba had an autonomous government elected by universal male suffrage. When the Americans expelled Spain from Cuba, the latter was no longer an oppressed colony.

Many changes took place in Cuba during the nineteenth century. In addition to economic growth, it experienced population growth, an increase in literacy, and the flourishing of the arts and sciences, and of a literature that revealed the development of a Cuban identity. The emancipation of slaves was achieved in Cuba between 1880 and 1886. After emancipation, between 1886 and 1893, the Spanish government in Cuba dismantled the legal edifice of racial discrimination and segregation that it had developed during the previous 400 years. Those laws were not dead letter, because US citizens not partial to Spain give testimony about their enforcement. US Consul General at Havana Fitzhugh Lee says in his section of the book that he co-authored with Joseph Wheeler in 1899, *Cuba's Struggle against Spain*,

> the Negro population of Cuba, both pure black and mulatto, are much more independent and manly in their bearing than their kinsmen in the United Sates. Their social privileges are also much greater, and, indeed, they are largely treated almost as the equals of the white race.[185]

Charles M. Pepper tells in his memoir *To-Morrow in Cuba* the story of a multiracial Cuban who, after being refused service at a café owned by an American, filed a legal demand against him, and had his cause redressed, saying, "After the American occupation a mulatto chief of the insurrection was refused entertainment in a café kept by an American. The Spanish code of civil rights, cited above, was invoked and was enforced."[186]

Throughout the nineteenth century, a civil society developed in Cuba.[187] The implementation on the island in 1881 of the Spanish Constitution of 1876 brought the rule of law there, and by the 1890s, Cuba had strong political parties, with political friends as well as political representation in Madrid. The English historian Hugh Thomas has remarked that the constitutional evolution in Cuba between 1878 and 1895 was quite fast by most colonial standards, comparing it favorably with that of British Jamaica and of the other islands of the West Indies in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Perhaps the Cuban Autonomous Government would not have survived on its own in the long run, but, as Hugh Thomas has said in his *Cuba or The Pursuit of Freedom*, if Cuban independence

had sprung from it, Cubans would have been spared US intervention and military rule.[188]

The most enduring contribution made by Spain to Cuba was its population. The census of Cuba made by the US occupation government in the island in 1899 says that 66 percent of the 1.5 million population of Cuba at that time was white. Since white immigration to Cuba from Northern Europe and the United States was very small in the nineteenth century, it seems likely that most of those whites were Spaniards or Cubans descended from Spaniards. Indeed, from 1511, thousands of Spaniards settled in Cuba, and created Cuban families. José Martí's parents were Spanish. José Antonio Saco, Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, Ignacio Agramonte, and Tomás Estrada Palma were of Spanish descent. Among the Afro-Cuban founders, Antonio Maceo's father was partly of Spanish descent, and Martín Morúa Delgado's father was a Spanish Basque. Gaspar Cisneros Betancourt, who decried the Spanish "racial stock" of the Cuban white population of his time, had Spanish ancestry himself. Even today, when most Cubans are multi-racial, it is more likely than not that a majority of the Cuban population has Spanish ancestors.

In 1895, the Spanish government acted most ungenerously towards loyal Cubans, by refusing to implement the decentralizing Abarzuza Law, and by attempting to end the war of Martí by force alone. Although the Spanish Liberal Party began to propose granting home rule to Cuba in 1896 (before the government of the United States demanded reforms for Cuba as a condition not to intervene in the conflict between Spain and separatist Cubans) it can be argued that they should have done so sooner. The Spanish political parties were shortsighted in their reluctance to grant autonomy to a people who had shown their capacity for constitutional government for almost two decades, and by not implementing the Abarzuza Law in 1895. The choice of repression, paired with the refusal to implement the Abarzuza Law, gave credibility to those Cubans who argued that the recourse to violence was the only way to obtain necessary political change from Spain, and the prestige won by the Cuban Liberation Army during the war bred militarism in Cuban society. On this account, one can say that the Spanish government was partly responsible for the militarization of political life in Cuba (although Martí's responsibility for this on account of his idealization of Cuban independence war leaders should be acknowledged). Furthermore, the reluctance of the Spanish government to grant home rule to Cuba earlier delegitimized those Cubans who rejected violence, those who advocated government by representative assemblies, and those who advocated the rule of law.

The US Congress Joint Resolution of April 19, 1898 stated that Cuba ought to be independent. Self-government for Cubans, granted by Spain in November of the previous year, was not enough for US Congressmen. President McKinley ordered Spain to leave Cuba at once, and war ensued because Spain did not comply. After the defeat of Spain, however, opinions in the United States changed. Senator Teller, who had drafted the Cuban independence clause as an amendment to that resolution, said in a speech that he gave on September 8, 1898 that Cubans were not ready for self-government. General Shafter, who had

been welcomed by Major General Calixto García as an ally, was reported in December 1898 as having said that Cubans were as fit for self-government as gun-powder was for hell. The intervention in Cuba by the United States burdened Cubans with the ambiguous experience of being granted formal independence by a nation that in actuality did not allow them to be independent, but expected them to be grateful for having liberated them from Spain, while despising them for being descendant of Spaniards. The remarks by Hugh Thomas mentioned before are worthy of consideration. Particularly so, because some historians still argue that, despite everything, the intervention of the United States in Cuba in 1898 was the best thing that could have happened for the cause of democracy in Cuba.[189]

Notes

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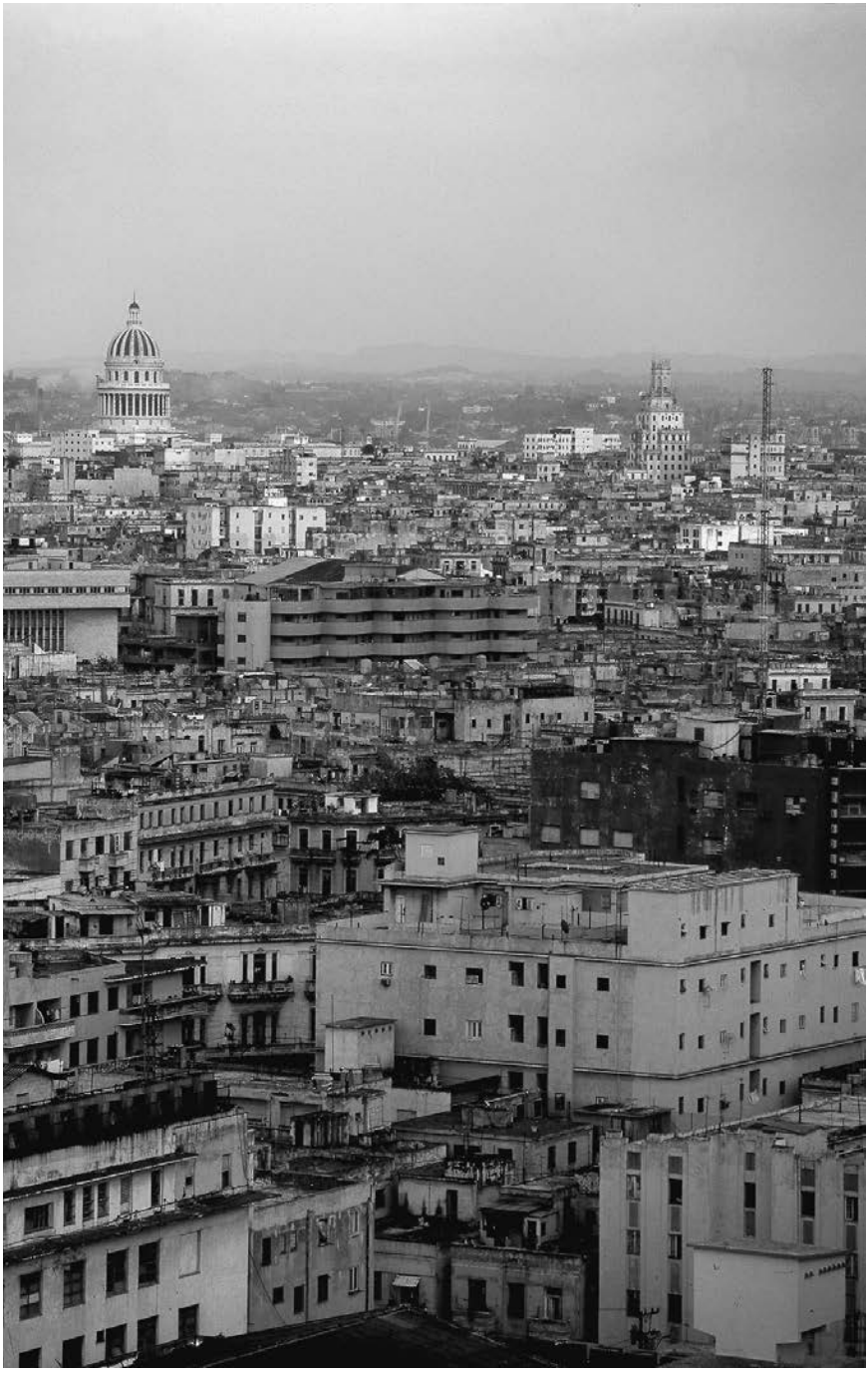

Figure 3.1 View of Central Havana.
Source: Photograph by Andrea Brizzi.

3 Military Occupations by the United States of America, and the Republic of Cuba

The United States Occupation of 1899–1902

From a logical analysis of the conduct of the government of the United States of America in 1898, one would not deduce that it went to war with Spain with the conviction that Cubans ought to be independent (as stated in the Teller Amendment to the Joint Resolution of the US Congress of April 19, 1898). Most Cubans in the separatist movement, however, called the US government their liberator. Major General Calixto García had a dispute with US General Shafter after the surrender of the Spanish general defending Santiago de Cuba in July 1898, because the American general accepted the conditions requested by the surrendering Spanish general: specifically, that Cuban rebel forces not be allowed to enter Santiago. However, shortly thereafter, he made his peace with the American occupiers, and told a reporter that if the people of Cuba voted for the annexation of Cuba by the United States he would not oppose the will of the people.[1] General Máximo Gómez, the most important military officer in the Cuban Liberation Army, cooperated with the American authorities in Cuba by disbanding this army after receiving a visit in February 1899 from Robert P. Porter, an envoy of President McKinley; Porter was accompanied by Gonzalo de Quesada, one of the two men left by José Martí in New York to direct the Cuban Revolutionary Party during his absence.[2]

During the first military occupation of Cuba by the United States some Cubans were incorporated by the two military governors that the island had in those years in their administrations. In 1899 General John Brooke had a cabinet of Cubans that included former Vice-President of the Cuban Republic in Arms, Dr. Domingo Méndez Capote, as Secretary of the Interior.[3] From 1899 to 1902, General Leonard Wood had a cabinet of Cubans that included two Cuban Liberation Army generals (General José Ramón Villalón as Secretary of Public Works, and General Juan Rius Rivera as Secretary for Agriculture), and a Cuban scholar (Enrique José Varona, who had taken over the publication of José Martí's newspaper *Patria* in New York after Martí's death in May 1895) as Secretary of Finance.[4] In August 1900, Dr. Carlos J. Finlay (1833–1915) was consulted by the medical commission sent to Cuba in that year to investigate the cause of yellow fever, and how to contain it, because this disease was afflicting many soldiers in the US occupation forces.

Dr. Finlay, born in the Cuban city of Puerto Principe (present-day Camagüey), studied medicine at the University of Havana, in Europe, and in the United States.

In 1881, at medical meetings in Havana and in Washington, D.C., Dr. Finlay read papers claiming that the mosquito was the agent of transmission of yellow fever, but his thesis was ignored, and he was unable to prove it experimentally. The containment of yellow fever outbreaks in Cuba was a matter of concern to the US occupation administration, and several members of the American medical commission sent to investigate yellow fever, chaired by Dr. Walter Reed, visited Dr. Finlay at his home in Havana, where they heard him explain his theory. After that meeting, they took with them *Aëdes aegyti* mosquito eggs kept by Dr. Finlay; once these eggs hatched they had the mosquitoes feed on yellow fever stricken patients, and then bite healthy soldiers. Dramatic proof of Dr. Finlay's theory was given when Dr. Jesse Lazear, member of the Yellow Fever Commission, was accidentally bitten by an infected mosquito, and died of yellow fever. When the commission published its findings, Dr. Reed claimed to be the discoverer of the mosquito/yellow fever link, and for many years he was given credit for Dr. Finlay's discovery. Due attribution of discovery was given to the Cuban only in 1935, when the Tenth International Congress of the History of Medicine recognized that the discovery of the agent of transmission of yellow fever had been made by him alone.[5]

Although Dr. Finlay's discovery was perhaps the most momentous scientific discovery made by a Cuban in the twentieth century, it was not the only one. Also during the years of US occupation in Cuba, in 1900, Cuban ophthalmologist Dr. Juan Santos Fernández (1847–1922) presented to the International Medical Congress meeting that year in Paris his paper "Enfermedades de los ojos en los negros y mulatos," ("Eye Illnesses of Blacks and Mulattos"), where he demonstrated that there were no new or special diseases determined by race.[6] Juan Santos Fernández was born in Cuba at the sugar mill town of "El Atrevido" (present-day Unión de Reyes) in 1847. He began to study medicine at the University of Havana, but he received his doctorate from the Colegio de San Carlos of Madrid in 1872. From 1872 to 1875 he trained in ophthalomologic surgery in Paris, and returned to Cuba in 1875. At the 1900 International Medical Congress in Paris he informed delegates that

> with rare exceptions, blacks and mulattos are affected by diseases of the eyes in Cuba in an analogous manner to people of other races, due to the development of causes and individual predispositions which no men are exempt from, no matter what their ethnic origin.[7]

He thus denied that there was any pathological character or hygienic deficiency peculiar to Cuba or any country in the tropics, or to the races that live there. In addition to this discovery, Dr. Juan Santos Fernández contributed to medicine in Cuba by leading the organization of national and international medical gatherings that gave prominence to the status of medicine and hygiene in the Republic of Cuba.[8]

The Cuban Constitution of 1901 and the Platt Amendment

Between 1898 and 1900, the annexation of Cuba by the United Sates was debated by people in the United States and in Cuba. In the United States, it

was proposed by ertswhile supporters of Cuban separatists such as Senator Henry Cabot Lodge and former US Consul at Havana Fitzhugh Lee as the logical outcome of a war to liberate Cuba from Spain, because they considered that only US sovereignty could guarantee freedom and prosperity in the island. Some historians of Cuba say that in 1898 the idea of the annexation of Cuba to the United States was espoused only by Spaniards and Cubans who had supported home rule from Spain.[9] But prominent Cuban-born individuals at that time, such as José Ignacio Rodriguez, published essays and periodical articles proposing the annexation of Cuba to the United States.[10] On the other hand, there were Spaniards who published in 1898 their views in favor of the independence of Cuba.[11] Former supporters of Cuban home rule under Spain who edited the newspaper *El Nuevo País* proposed a protectorate status for Cuba, but an impartial look at their writings reveals that they did so in order to forestall annexation, which they considered to be the reason why US President William McKinley and prominent members of his administration had provoked a war with Spain. They did not support the annexation of Cuba by the United States.[12]

In 1900, the US government decided to honor the promise in the Teller Amendment to the Joint Resolution of the US Congress of April 19, 1898, and to allow Cuba to become independent. With that purpose, the US military governor of Cuba at that time, General Leonard Wood, allowed elections for a Constitutional Assembly in Cuba. Unlike the electoral law of the Cuban Autonomous Government, which incorporated the concept of universal male suffrage, the electoral law drafted by the American governor limited suffrage by property and literacy requirements. This limited suffrage law brought about criticism from some Cubans. In several Cuban cities, people demonstrated in the streets against it. In Havana, Dr. Eusebio Hernández (friend of the late Afro-Cuban General Antonio Maceo), asserted that the electoral law issued by Governor Wood was inferior to the electoral law issued by the Queen of Spain with the decree creating the Cuban Autonomous Government in November 1897.[13] Despite the many protests, the elections took place as decreed by Governor Wood, and a Cuban Constitutional Assembly met at Havana in 1900. Among the issues debated by the Constitutional Assembly was what sort of suffrage the new republic should have. Manuel Sanguily was one of those members of the Assembly who proposed universal male suffrage, and during the debates on suffrage he referred several times to the precedent represented in Cuba by the universal male suffrage electoral law implemented by the government of Spain, a monarchy, during the last year of its sovereignty in Cuba.[14] The Assembly decided to adopt universal male suffrage in its charter for the Republic of Cuba.

Governor Wood told the Cuban Constitutional Assembly that they had to introduce in the charter as an amendment a document presented to the US Senate Committee on Cuban Affairs by Senator Orville Platt. This imposition was rejected by some of the members of the Constitutional Assembly, but after they were told by Governor Wood that if they did not introduce that amendment in the constitution of the Republic of Cuba there would be no Republic of Cuba, they voted on what course to take, and the majority voted to include in the Cuban Constitution of 1901 the addendum drafted by Senator Platt, later called the Platt

Amendment. This addendum granted to the government of the United States the right to establish naval and coaling bases in Cuba, to veto Cuban foreign treaties, and to intervene in Cuba whenever it considered this necessary.[15] In an article on the relation of the United States to the people of Cuba and Puerto Rico published by Senator Platt in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* in 1900, he explained that although he thought that universal suffrage in Cuba was going to result in trouble and difficulty, the United States had no right to prescribe the elective franchise to Cuba, but that it had the right to insist on provisions in the constitution of Cuba which would clearly define the relations which were going to exist between the United States and Cuba, saying: "It is as much of our duty to exercise our power in the maintenance of an independent, stable and peaceful government there as it was to exercise it in the destruction of a monarchical, oppressive and inhuman one."[16]

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, some Americans thought that Cubans were eventually going to ask to be annexed to the United States, and during that period US citizens went to Cuba and established American "settler colonies." It seems that officers in the administrations of Presidents William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt agreed with them. Some Cubans also wanted the annexation of Cuba to the United States, and formed a *Sociedad Anexionista* to promote support for this idea among the Cuban people. A prominent supporter of the idea of the annexation of Cuba to the United States was José Ignacio Rodríguez, a friend of José Martí.[17] But by 1922, when Leland Hamilton Jenks wrote his book on Cuban relations with the United States, *Our Cuban Colony*, the US government had decided to renounce territorial conquests overseas, in order to avoid granting citizenship to colonial subjects (Puerto Ricans were granted US citizenship in 1917), and confronting colonial revolts (like the Filipino rebellion that took place between 1898 and 1902).[18]

Revolutionary Party Men and Liberation Army Generals as Presidents: 1902–1933

In 1902, Cuba obtained its formal independence from the United States. The new republic preserved the administrative divisions established in the island in 1878, when it was granted representation in the Madrid parliament, but the names of two provinces were changed: Puerto Príncipe became Camagüey, and Cuba became Oriente. It began its existence as a representative republic, having as President Tomás Estrada Palma, leader of the Cuban Revolutionary Party after the death of José Martí. Tomás Estrada Palma was selected to run for President by Governor Leonard Wood. His only contender, General Bartolomé Masó, withdrew in protest against the interference of the American occupation governor in the presidential campaign. Thus, the first candidate to be President of the Republic of Cuba ran unopposed. President Estrada Palma was inaugurated on May 20, 1902, henceforth called "Cuban Independence Day," and a day celebrated as a national holiday in the Republic of Cuba.

Tomás Estrada Palma was an honest administrator who did much to rebuild the economy of Cuba, using revenue from the sugar industry to restore and

expand the infrastructure of the island and its school system, which had been destroyed by the war of 1895. In both instances, he went beyond what had been accomplished in Cuba by 1895, particularly in raising the educational level of the Cuban population. Since Cuba was now independent, he sought commercial treaties with other nations. In 1903, he sent Rafael Montoro (former Minister of the Economy of the Cuban Autonomous Government) as ambassador to London, where he was successful in negotiating a trade treaty between Cuba and Great Britain.[19] The Anglo-Cuban Treaty of Commerce was signed on May 4, 1905, but it required ratification to enact its terms. In Havana, Herbert Squires, the US Minister (diplomatic representative of a lesser rank than ambassador, but higher than consul) in Cuba, expressed his opposition to the commercial treaty negotiated by Montoro with Great Britain, and the Cuban Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, interpreting the opposition of the US Minister as a veto of the US government, was reluctant to approve this treaty with a foreign power other than the United States. Eventually, on May 23, 1906, the Cuban Senate Foreign Relations Committee recommended ratification of that treaty, after imposing to it several key amendments, including the removal of most favorable nation treatment for British shipment, and the Cuban Senate ratified the treaty as amended.[20] This incident suggests that Cubans in exalted positions in the Cuban government under the Platt Amendment were reluctant to support independent initiatives perceived as being opposed by the United States.

The United States signed in 1903 a reciprocity treaty with Cuba similar to the Foster-Cánovas Treaty that it had signed with Spain in 1891. The tariff schedule of this reciprocity treaty conceded to Cuban raw sugar and tobacco leaf a 20 percent tariff reduction, and in return Cuba granted the USA a 20 percent concession on most items, with 24, 30, and 40 percent on selected categories. The higher reductions were obtained for goods for which American officials anticipated competition, including linen goods, shoes, soap, and rice.[21] Like the Foster-Canovas Treaty, the reciprocity treaty of 1903 was intended to capture the Cuban market for a wide variety of US manufactures and agricultural commodities, while benefiting Cuban raw sugar cane and producers of tobacco leaf only.

President Estrada Palma had an authoritarian style, and he took recourse to governing by executive order, rather than by building coalitions of supporters in the Cuban Congress. In doing so, he set a precedent of authoriatarian rule that did little to develop in the Republic of Cuba the tradition of an executive office limited by Congress. Furthermore, he could not resist the temptation to be dishonest in the presidential elections following his first term in office, and the results of the rigged elections of 1905 were denounced by his opponent, the populist General José Miguel Gómez (a former officer in the Cuban Liberation Army). José Miguel Gómez rose up in arms against him, and President Estrada Palma asked the US government to intervene in Cuba, invoking the Platt Amendment. US President Theodore Roosevelt refused to intervene at first, but he was forced to do so when the President of the Republic of Cuba resigned from office. In a letter to a friend written during this crisis, Tomás Estrada Palma expressed his opinion that Cuba would fare better being under the United States than being an independent nation state.[22]

The resignation of Tomás Estrada Palma, together with the uprising of General José Miguel Gómez, brought about a second US military occupation of Cuba that lasted from 1906 to 1909. The American governor during that occupation, Charles Magoon, supervised the drafting of legal codes that would provide Cuba with all the legal accoutrements of a twentieth century representative republic, and created a Cuban Army.[23] The elections overseen by Governor Magoon in 1909 were won cleanly by General José Miguel Gómez. This was a dubious victory for democracy, though, because Gómez became notorious for his use of the Cuban treasury as if it were his private banking account. Historians who have focused on the informal economy and political corruption and violence in the Republic of Cuba have called it "a gangster state," and although that categorization is perhaps an exaggeration, particularly taking into account that many developed nations in Europe during much of that time period (1909–1959) suffered from shortcomings similar to those criticized in Cuba by those historians. But it is a fact that the successors of Tomás Estrada Palma as President of Cuba did not imitate his honesty as an administrator of public funds.[24]

José Miguel Gómez may have been corrupt, but he was not insensitive to the masses. He sprinkled his generosity on popular groups, and made efforts to mitigate racial discrimination. Furthermore, his mishandling of public funds in order to keep a patronage network was not unprecedented or unique to Cuba. It was common practice in the Roman Republic during Antiquity, and it was practiced in the United States during the twentieth century by American politicians such as Louisiana Governor Huey Long in the 1930s, and by Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley in the 1950s. Ironically, it was under the administration of this populist president that one of the cruelest single acts of repression in the history of the Republic of Cuba took place: the repression in 1912 of the uprising of Afro-Cubans led by a former officer of the Cuban Liberation Army, General Evaristo Estenoz, and his aide Pedro Ivonet. These men felt that the socio-political position of Cubans of African descent had not improved with the establishment of an independent republic, and they agitated for change in the Cuban Congress. In an effort to unite all Cubans of African descent in a political party behind them, in 1907 they formed a racially designated political party, the Independent Party of Color. This party was banned in 1912, following the passing by the Cuban Congress that year of a law forbidding the formation of political parties based on race or religious affiliation. In May of that year there were demonstrations by blacks throughout Cuba in protest against this ban. Frustrated in their efforts to bring change by legislation, Estenoz and Ivonet led a group of Afro-Cubans to armed rebellion in eastern Cuba.

The reaction to this rebellion at all levels among Cuban whites (or Cubans who perceived themselves as white) was dramatic. José Miguel Gómez ordered the formation of volunteer armed battalions to suppress the uprising, and asked for armed support from the US government. White Cubans in eastern Cuba formed paramilitary groups who, while searching for potential rebels, killed many unarmed blacks, including women and children. By the time this rebellion ended, more than 3,000 Afro-Cubans had been killed. The Independent Party of Color was the first and the last political party founded on racial or religious lines

in Cuba. After its banning in Cuba, there was no other party with the mission to redress the grievances of the black Cuban population, but the defeat of Estenoz and Ivonet did not mark the end of political participation by blacks in Cuba.

As Alejandro de la Fuente has said, "Unlike the aftermath of Reconstruction in the US South, 1912 did not result in a disenfranchisement of Afro-Cubans. Office seekers still needed the black vote to win elections, and this need created opportunities for black participation."[25] Legal racial discrimination had been ended in Cuba before the end of Spanish sovereignty on the island, and under the Republic of Cuba, Afro-Cubans were politically active and were elected to public office. The Republic of Cuba was not devoid of racial discrimination, but that racial discrimination was not prescribed by law, and Afro-Cubans participated freely in its cultural and political life. In the Republic of Cuba being black was not a legal impediment to hold public office, as one can see in Cuba's *Código Electoral* of 1932.[26] Certainly it was not in 1940, when Fulgencio Batista, a multiracial man, was elected President of Cuba.

General José Miguel Gómez was succeeded in 1913 by another Cuban Liberation Army general, Mario García Menocal. Although García Menocal was born to a wealthy family, and was educated in the United States (he was an agricultural engineer, graduating from Cornell University) he was as much a kleptocrat as Gómez, and as authoritarian as Estrada Palma. In 1917, he was re-elected in contested elections that provoked armed uprisings throughout Cuba. This incident in the history of Cuba (known as the War of Chambelona), ended with the suppression of all rebels by the Cuban Army. After two four-year terms, García Menocal was succeeded in 1921 by Alfredo Zayas, a civilian former member of the Cuban Revolutionary Party. Alfredo Zayas was as corrupt as his two predecessors, and by the end of his term, Cubans were clamoring for the end of corruption in public office. In the elections of 1925, Cubans voted overwhelmingly for a candidate who included honesty in public office in his presidential platform, Gerardo Machado, a former general of the Cuban Liberation Army turned businessman.

Gerardo Machado was a better administrator than Zayas. Although some historians have charged that he took bribes, and made private deals with US business companies while in office, it cannot be denied that under his administration roads were built, harbors were enlarged, and Cuba's small manufacturing enterprises were protected by raising tariffs for certain imports. During the Machado administration, Cubans were encouraged to buy Cuban- manufactured goods, and internal trade was supported by the newly built roads. President Machado began a national highway crossing Cuba from west to east, linking Havana and Santiago de Cuba by land, and passing through most large and medium-size Cuban cities, including all the provincial capitals.

The first three years of the Machado administration benefitted from a prosperous world economy. During these years, Machado initiated an ambitious plan for the urban development of Havana. In 1925 he engaged French architect and city planner Jean-Claude Nicolas Forestier to plan the urban development of the city, and to design new public buildings for it in the neoclassic style favored by the French Ecole des Beaux Arts. The plan of Forestier included university buildings

on a hill reminiscent of Athens's Parthenon, and a grand house crowned by a dome for Cuba's Congress, reminiscent of Rome's *campidoglio*, the *Capitolio Nacional*.[27] But the good feelings of the first Machado presidential term began to disappear when prosperity ended in Cuba after the 1929 crash of the New York Stock Exchange, which initiated an international economic crisis.

Economic depression in the United States dramatically affected the Cuban economy, which was dependent on sugar exports to its northern neighbor. Cuban economic activity contracted, and unemployment provoked the impoverishment of those who had raised their economic position during the prosperity of the previous decade. Unemployment and poverty provoked widespread labor unrest, and the Machado government dealt ruthlessly with demonstrators and labor organizers. Amidst this political unrest, the Cuban Communist Party, which had been founded in 1925, began to grow. In 1929, Julio Antonio Mella, one of the founders of the Cuban Communist Party, was assassinated in Mexico, under circumstances that indicated the complicity of General Machado's agents in his assassination.

Towards the end of his first term, General Machado insisted in having his term extended from four to six years, suggesting that he did not want to be re-elected, but that he needed some extra years in order to accomplish what he had planned for Cuba. This project found enough supporters in the Cuban Congress and Supreme Court to amend the Cuban Constitution in 1929. But after his term in office was extended, General Machado sought to be re-elected for a second six-year term. Some members of the traditional political class joined forces with radicalized workers and students to oppose him, and their acts of civil disobedience (as well as violent protest) drove General Machado to increasingly dramatic acts of repression that had the dubious honor of being the political background to the action in Ernest Hemingway's novel *To Have and to Have Not*. A secret society formed by students and young members of prominent Cuban families, called ABC, began to kill government officials, and the government special police force called *la porra* increased its persecution of student organizers and labor union leaders. In March 1933, the President of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, sent to Cuba a special ambassador, Mr. Benjamin Sumner Welles, to demand General Machado's resignation.[28]

The Revolution of 1933, the Rise of General Batista, and the Autentico Party Years: 1933–1952

President Machado refused to accept the demand from President Roosevelt that he resign (presented to him by Mr. Welles), but a coup d'état by petty officers in the Cuban Army led by Fulgencio Batista and a simultaneous general strike that paralyzed the island in September 1933 made him realize that he had lost control of Cuba. General Machado resigned, and left Cuba. The sudden end of the Machado administration brought about lootings in towns, the illegal occupation by workers of landed properties in the countryside, and the lynching of Machado supporters throughout Cuba. In Havana, a provisional government led by students, labor leaders, and petty army officers was established. This government,

presided by Dr. Ramón Grau San Martín, a professor at the Medical School in the University of Havana, passed some revolutionary measures (among them the abrogation of the Platt Amendment from the Cuban Constitution), but mostly it tried to bring back order. Special American Ambassador Welles was displeased with the provisional government, and he decided to undermine it by withholding legitimacy from it, not recognizing it as a government. Ambassador Welles found an ally in Fulgencio Batista, who had promoted himself to general, and developed a clientelistic network in the Cuban armed forces.[29] After 100 days of existence, the new government was brought down by a coup d'état led by General Batista, with the encouragement of Ambassador Welles.

General Batista was a self-made man from a poor family of multi-racial ancestry. He was unlettered until he joined the Cuban Army, where he acquired a basic education and secretarial skills. Batista betrayed the revolutionary government that he had helped bring about when he realized that the US government was not going to allow a radical political regime in a neighboring country that it considered to be a dependency. General Batista did not declare himself President after his second coup d'état in 1933, but he was the real power behind those men who held nominally the title of President between 1934 and 1940. There was opposition to Batista's backroom dictatorship. Prominent among those who opposed him was Antonio (Tony) Guiteras, founder of the group *Joven Cuba*, whom he had murdered.[30] Batista repressed radical ideas, independent political thinking, and any opposition to himself during that period; but he also advanced social legislation that improved the living conditions of workers, and the civil rights and socio-economic opportunities of non-whites in Cuba, and had a working relationship with the Cuban Communist Party, founded in 1925.[31] Batista was in good terms with Cuban Comunist Party leaders Blas Roca and Carlos Rafael Rodríguez.

In 1934, during this period of Batista dominance over Cuban political life, the United States agreed to the abrogation of the Platt Amendment from the Cuban Constitution of 1901. In that year, the United States also signed a new economic reciprocity treaty. The treaty of 1934 seemed advantageous to Cuba, because it guaranteed the purchase by the United States of a quota of Cuban sugar production. But the guarantee of an export market for Cuban sugar in its near neighbor and major trade partner discouraged attempts to economic diversification in Cuba. More importantly, this treaty encouraged Cuba's economic dependence on the United States.[32]

In 1940, General Batista oversaw the drafting of a new constitution for Cuba that included among its most salient features advanced social legislation and public services, safeguards for private property, and a single four-year presidential term of office. At the end of that year, General Batista was elected President in elections broadly recognized as legitimate.[33] In 1944, contrary to all expectations, he oversaw a fair election, and left Cuba at the end of his four-year term.[34] Batista was succeeded as President by Dr. Ramón Grau San Martín. After 1934, Dr. Grau San Martín became less radical, but he formed the Authentic Cuban Revolutionary Party (*Partido Revolucionario Cubano Auténtico*) that claimed to be the authentic political successor of José Martí's Cuban Revolutionary Party.

During his administration, he implemented a program of public works to build a national infrastructure, and to beautify Havana. He adopted an independent international posture, while assuring the United States of his willingness to support it in the gatherings of international organizations like the United Nations. Although the 1934 reciprocity treaty (which guaranteed to Cuban sugar producers the purchase by the United States of a quota of their annual output) encouraged monoculture indirectly, and tied Cuba to the economy of its powerful northern neighbor, his administration was not directed by the US government, and it took an assertive foreign policy stance.

Dr. Grau San Martín was succeeded in 1949 by another civilian from the *Auténtico* Party, Carlos Prío Socarrás, who continued his independent foreign policy and his domestic public works programs. Unfortunately, Carlos Prío also imitated his predecessor in his policy of appeasement of political gangsters who had gained control of student organizations at the University of Havana, and in the private appropriation of public funds. The high level of corruption in public administration under Carlos Prío brought about denunciations by the congressman Eduardo (Eddy) Chibás, who broke away from the *Auténtico* Party and founded a new party that he called *Partido Ortodoxo*, because of his claims to political orthodoxy in relation to José Martí's gospel.[35] Chibás was successful in making Cubans aware of the need for change in their political culture, but he was an unstable man. During a radio broadcast criticizing once again corruption in Cuban political life, he killed himself while on the air.

It is a commonplace to say that General Batista controlled Cuban politics throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Fulgencio Batista attained prominence in 1934, and left Cuba honorably (perhaps loved by some) in 1944. When Batista returned to Cuba in 1951 in order to be a candidate in the 1952 elections for the presidency of Cuba, he was not a hated man, and he certainly had political friends, but he was far from controlling Cuban politics between 1944 and 1951. Actually, he was expected to lose the elections of 1952, and most likely organized his coup d'état of March 10, 1952 because he knew that he was going to lose them.[36]

Economic, Cultural and Social Achievements of the Republic of Cuba

While in the first two decades of the Republic of Cuba most arable land in the island was not in the hands of residents of Cuba (but in those of individuals or corporations based in the United States) the reverse was the case in 1952.[37] Beginning with the economic crisis that followed the temporary high demand for Cuban sugar created by World War I, many US owners of sugar plantations and mills in Cuba began to sell their properties to Cuban residents.[38] Cattle raising and truck farming grew, and while sugar remained the engine of the economy, by 1952 the Republic of Cuba had become self-sufficient in many food staples. Manufacturing enterprises begun in Cuba during the last quarter of the nineteenth century became well established by the 1930s, making the Cuban economy different to that of "sugar islands" in the Caribbean region. Some of

the small industries in Cuba were of considerable size, and the industrial sector of the Cuban economy grew in the years between 1948 and 1958.[39] Cigar and cigarette manufacture prospered thanks to a growing internal market for cigarettes, and to the development of a luxury "niche" in the global market for handmade cigars.[40] Among Cuban manufactures other than sugar and tobacco products, the distillery and brewery company *Ron Bacardí* became the largest, and the only one with an export market.[41] In the article "Cuba: A Sugar Economy," published in the periodical *Current History* in 1952, Myron S. Heidingsfield remarked that although the Cuban economy was dominated by sugar production Cuba enjoyed one of the highest per capita incomes in Latin America.[42]

The Cuban population grew from 1.5 million in 1898 to eight million in 1958, to a large extent through immigration. Chinese immigration, initiated in the nineteenth century through contract workers, continued during the twentieth century through free immigration.[43] Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe and the Middle East began to arrive in force beginning in 1902, among them Francisco Ruz, grandfather of Fidel Castro Ruz.[44] Between 1902 and 1940 thousands of Jamaicans and Haitians entered Cuba as contract workers, and although many of them were deported between 1933 and 1938, large numbers stayed and settled on the island.[45] Most significant was continuing immigration from Spain, although in diminishing numbers from 1902 to the 1950s.[46]

Changes in the population of Cuba were not quantitative only. By 1958 the Cuban middle class had grown, and the extremes of wealth and poverty existing in nineteenth century Cuba had decreased. Labor organizations were formed in Cuba during the nineteenth century, before the Republic of Cuba was established. Their number grew, and there were successful labor strikes during the first decades of the twentieth century. The association of all unions within the *Confederación Nacional Obrera de Cuba* (CNOC) in 1925 made them stronger.[47] It can be argued that the administration of President Machado was brought down in 1933 partly on account of the general strike taking place at the time of the coup d'état led by Batista. Social legislation enshrined in the Constitution of 1940 included social security and a national public health system. Culturally, too, Cuba had advanced in those 50 years. This was demonstrated by an increase in literacy, and the foundation of three new universities and many secondary schools. In 1950, more than 75 percent of the Cuban population could read and write. Only Costa Rica and Argentina had a higher literacy rate in Latin America.[48]

The University of Havana was reorganized in 1900 under the administration of General Wood by the Cuban scholar Enrique Jose Varona. The new university de-emphasized the humanities and emphasized the applied sciences and the professions, and it created a school of architecture. Most of the structures build in Cuba before the twentieth century were designed by master builders. In the twentieth century they were designed by architects trained at the University of Havana. The University school of architecture favored the formalized classicism of the Parisian *Ecole des Beaux Arts*. This reinforced the nineteenth century dominance of that style, which was popular in Cuba until the 1920s, when two

new styles were introduced from abroad: Catalan Art Nouveau and US Art Deco. Today American imperialism is blamed for the similarity between the national capitol in Havana and that of the US national capitol in Washington, D.C., but the neoclassicism of Cuba's capitol is of French origin, since its original design was made by French architech Jean-Claude Nicolas Forestier, hired by President Machado to do a master plan for Havana. In 1947 there was a revolt of students at the University school of architecture, and students burned the classical architecture textbooks which were required reading. At that time most Cuban architects adopted the modernist style, which became predominant in Cuba in the 1950s.[49]

The flowering of the arts and letters in Cuba during the first half of the twentieth century was remarkable. Modern painting flourished in the 1940s, when painters like Wifredo Lam attained international recognition, and a galaxy of painters such as René Portocarrero and Amelia Peláez were patronized by private and corporate art collectors.[50] The works of writers such as Nicolás Guillén, José Lezama Lima, and Gastón Baquero were read in Spain and Spanish America. Nicolás Guillén and other Afro-Cuban poets, like Marcelino Arozarena, developed a style of poetry that was called "poesía negrista," because it was characterized by being written in the Spanish spoken by uneducated urban Cuban blacks or following the meter of popular Cuban dances of African origin, like the son.[51] Between 1928 and 1931, Havana's prominent newspaper *Diario de la Marina* published a weekly supplement, "Ideales de una raza," edited by Afro-Cuban intellectual Gustavo E. Urrutia, to which Afro-Cuban prose and poetry writers contributed.[52] Nicolás Guillén first published in that supplement the collection of poems that made him famous: "Motivos de Son." Although Guillén's "negrista" and radical political poems are well known, most of his other poems are not as well known as they should be. He was multi-racial, and is probably the only major Cuban poet who ever acknowledged explicitly his Spanish roots. He did so in his poem "Ballad of the Two Grandfathers." In that poem Guillén says: "Shadows which only I see,/ I am watched by my two grandfathers./ A bone-point lance,/ a drum of hide and wood:/ my black grandfather./ A ruff on a broad neck,/ a warrior's gray armament:/ my white grandfather."[53]

Composers such as Amadeo Roldán (1900–1939), and Alejandro García Caturla (1906–1940) wrote classical music inspired by rhythms and themes of Cuban popular music of African origin. They were part of the nationalistic classical music movement that took place worldwide during the first three decades of the twentieth century, and their works were performed by major orchestras in Paris and New York. In the 1930s, a Cuban lyrical theater came into being. Musical dramas that included Afro-Cuban rhythms in their scores and gave prominence to Afro-Cubans among its characters were created by the composers Eliseo Grenet, Ernesto Lecuona, Rodrigo Pratts, and Gonzalo Roig.[54] *Cecilia Valdés*, by Gonzalo Roig, expanded by its composer to operatic proportions in the 1960s, is for some Cubans today the equivalent of a national opera.

In the 1940s and the 1950s, Cuban popular music produced a constellation of artists. Composers like Dámaso Pérez Prado, creator of the dance rhythm known as mambo, and singers such as Olga Guillot and Celia Cruz made Cuban popular

music known around the world.[55] Throughout the 1940s, composer Ernesto Lecuona (1896–1963) toured Europe and the United States with a band that played Cuban dancing music, "Lecuona's Cuban Boys," and in 1943 he was engaged by Warner Brothers Studio to compose the title song for the motion picture *You Are Always in My Heart*. Lecuona's success as a composer of popular music was such that it overshadowed his talent as a classical music composer.[56]

Popular music in Cuba was encouraged by the development of mass media in the island from early on the twentieth century. PXW, the first Cuban radio station, was inaugurated on October 10, 1922. Eight years later, Cuba had 61 radio stations and radio was a nascent Cuban industry.[57] Cuba's first television station, SMUR-TV, was inaugurated in October 1950 by Gaspar Pumarejo, a well known radio personality, and its rival, CMQ, began airing television programs in December of that year. Three years later, Cuba was home to nine of the 20 television stations in Latin America.[58] Radio and television made Cuban popular music composers and performers household names, although they may have created an audience also for American jazz and television shows.

American historians of Cuba and Cubans in the United States emphasize North American influence in the popular culture of the Republic of Cuba.[59] As a matter of fact, popular culture in the Republic of Cuba was cosmopolitan, because Latin American and European popular musicians and film actors were widely known in Cuba, and Cuban popular musicians and dance rythms were known in Latin America and Europe. Cuban television in the 1950s presented popular Latin American and Spanish singers such as Lucho Gatica and Sarita Montiel. Recordings of Latin American and Spanish singing groups like *Los Cinco Latinos* and *Los Chavales de España* were sold in Cuban record stores. Cuban popular interest in Spanish-speaking singers from other Spanish-speaking countries bears to reason, because outside of Havana (whose population had reached one million in 1958) the vast majority of Cubans did not speak or understand English fluently. Educated Cubans were familiar with non-Spanish European popular stars. Havana night clubs Montmartre and Sans Souci booked European singers such as Edith Piaff and Charles Aznavour.[60] A look at the film review pages in national circulation Cuban magazines like *Bohemia* and *Carteles* in issues from the 1940s and the 1950s shows references to Mexican, Argentinean, and European films, as well as to Hollywood films.

Athletism and professional sports had followers in the Republic of Cuba. US-originated baseball became Cuba's national sport, but between 1902 and 1958 Cubans became interested also in boxing and track.[61] Cuban athletes participated in international sports competitions, including the Olympic Games. But the best internationally known Cuban sportsman of that period is perhaps the chess player José Raúl Capablanca. Born at Havana in 1901, he won first place at the annual World Chess Championship celebrated in his native city in 1921. Capablanca held the title of Chess World Champion until 1927, when he lost it to Alexander Alekhine. After losing his title he tried to regain it until his death in 1942.[62]

In the Republic of Cuba professional and cultural associations thrived. In the first years of the Republic medical doctors, dentists, pharmacologists, and lawyers created nation-wide associations (*colegios*). Associations like the

Rotarians and the Knights of Columbuts were introduced from the United States. Secret societies of Afro-Cubans, sometimes associated to a specific African ethnic group (*nación*) or religious rite, were penalized during the early years of the Republic, but after 1933 they were no longer penalized.[63] Afro-Cuban mutual aid and cultural societies, which had proliferated in the last 20 years of Spanish Cuba, flourished between 1902 and 1958.[64]

In the 1920s, the Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba was able to inspire Cuban Catholics to contribute to a national collection for the construction of a grand national shrine in eastern Cuba dedicated to Our Lady of Charity, in the town of El Cobre. Beginning in the late 1940s the Catholic Church experienced a revival, when a lay organization called Catholic Action gained a considerable number of members in Cuba's cities and towns. Catholic Action encouraged Catholic men and women to participate in political life, and to act upon the ethical teachings of their faith on social issues, including social justice.[65] Protestant churches established congregations in Cuba in the nineteenth century, under the restricted religious freedom allowed by the Spanish Constitution of 1876. After 1898, American Protestant missionary societies sent missionaries to Cuba, and several Protestant churches were established. By the 1950s, denominations like the Baptists and Jehova Witnesses had made many converts in the Cuban countryside, and among the urban poor; the Methodists competed with the Catholic Church in the building of schools.[66] Syncretic religions mixing elements of Catholicism with elements from African religions had developed in Cuba by the end of the nineteenth century. These Afro-Cuban religions were marginalized for many years, but by the 1940s they had acquired many white followers, and their membership went beyond the poor and the uneducated.[67]

Most historians criticize the *Auténtico* Party years because of the corruption in high places under the two presidents of that party, Ramón Grau San Martín and Carlos Prío Socarrás (once, under Grau San Martín, a diamond enshrined in the Cuban Congress Building to indicate the starting point of the national Central Highway built by Machado disappeared; after a public outcry, it reappeared on top of the desk in the Presidential Office). Under Grau San Martín and Prío Socarrás, however, the Cuban government was responsive to the aspirations of Cubans of the working classes, allowing independent trade unions. It also allowed public criticism of its failings. The bitter criticism of corruption by Senator Eduardo Chibás brought about some restraint in the behavior of Cuban cabinet ministers and congressmen during the 1940s and it explains the positive reception given to a books that foretold Cuba's destiny to lead the nations bordering on the Caribbean, *Diálogos sobre el destino*, by Gustavo Pittaluga, winner of the 1950 Ricardo Velasco Award, given by the Cuban Publishers Association (Cámara Cubana del Libro).[68] In the 1930s a nationalist spirit had rekindled among the Cuban intelligentsia and some elements among the Cuban economic elites. They embraced a Cuban identity based on Hispanic and African cultural elements distinct to the Anglo-Saxon culture dominant in the United States, and favored a more independent stance for Cuba in the world. This nationalism came into full bloom during the administration of Grau San Martín and that of Prío Socarrás.

The Cult of José Martí

A cultural phenomenon that took place in the Republic of Cuba stands out—the development between 1902 and 1953 of a "*culto martiano*" ("Cult of José Martí"). José Julián Martí was born at Havana in 1853, the son of two Spanish immigrants (his father was from Valencia, and his mother from Tenerife). But in 1869, during the Ten Years War, he was imprisoned for writing a letter to a Cuban fellow student, criticizing his loyalty to the Spanish government. Convicted of high treason for that action, Martí was condemned to forced labor. Subsequently his sentence was commuted to exile in Spain, where he met other young Cubans with intellectual inclinations. In 1875 he went to Mexico, where he became involved with intellectual circles, and to Guatemala, where he taught at the national teachers' school. Martí returned to Cuba in 1878, taking advantage of the amnesty granted by the Pact of El Zanjón to Cubans who had participated in one way or another in the rebellion of 1868. He joined intellectual circles at Havana, and became friends with Afro-Cuban journalist and writer Juan Gualberto Gómez. Also, he became involved in the conspiracy that led to the Guerra Chiquita of 1879, and when the colonial authorities learned about this, they deported him once again to Spain.

Martí made his way to the United States in 1880, and settled in New York City, where he joined Cuban exile circles. It was there that he met Tomás Estrada Palma, Rafael Serra, and Gonzalo de Quesada. The young, American-educated Quesada was the first one to call him "*El Apóstol*."[69] In 1890, Martí was invited to speak in Tampa and Key West, where he met the leaders of the Cuban exile communities. He became well known among the communities along the Eastern seaboard of the United States, and in 1892 the Cuban Revolutionary Party came into being under his leadership.[70] Before leaving the United States for the Dominican Republic in early 1895 (in order to join the expedition of General Máximo Gómez to Cuba), Martí left Tomás Estrada Palma and Gonzalo de Quesada in charge of the operations of the Cuban Revolutionary Party. But shortly after Martí's death in Cuba on May 19 of that year, some Cubans in the exile community began to disagree with the direction that Estrada Palma and Quesada gave to the party; the dissidents felt that Martí would have done things differently if he had not died. Rafael Serra began to publish a newspaper that advocated these alternate interpretations of how Martí really wanted to run the Cuban Revolutionary Party. His newspaper was called *La Doctrina de Martí*.[71]

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Martí was not known in Cuba as well as he was known among the Cuban exile communities in the United States.[72] Nevertheless, under the administration of Tomás Estrada Palma as President of Cuba (1902–1906), a monument to Martí was raised on the popular Havana thoroughfare known at that time as *El Paseo del Prado*, and today known as *Paseo de Martí*.[73] During the same decade, Gonzalo de Quesada began to collect Martí's writings in order to publish his complete works.[74] Between 1900 and 1930, biographical accounts of Martí, and compilations of fragments of his works were published. These publications made him known throughout Cuba, and popularized his works, at least in part.[75] In 1927, his memory was

politicized by the Marxist student leader Julio Antonio Mella, who claimed in his *Glosas al pensamiento de Martí*, in a manner analogous to Serra in his articles for *La Doctrina de Martí*, that if Martí had not died in 1895, he would have been a socialist in 1927.[76] The hagiographic biography *Martí, el Apóstol*, published in Havana in 1934 by Jorge Mañach, crystalized the image of Martí the perfect man with the perfect plan for Cuba; Mañach postulated Martí's death as a tragedy that deprived Cuba of a leader who would have put the Republic on a much more successful path.[77]

By 1940 (the year of the promulgation of the second constitution of the Republic of Cuba), Martí had become a Cuban political icon. All population centers in the island were mandated to have a street, monument or plaque commemorating him; his birthday was a national holiday, and children of all schools—public and private—were expected to celebrate this holiday by participating in some act in his memory.[78] The celebration of José Martí's birthday in Cuba (and the idealization of his life) are reminiscent of the idolization of Simón Bolívar in Venezuela, and that of George Washington in the United States until the 1960s. After all, the national American holiday now known as "President's Day" used to be called "Washington's Birthday." But the cult of Martí in Cuba went beyond respect and role modeling. After the 1920s, all politicians (including General Fulgencio Batista) took up his name, claiming to follow Martí's ideals. The electors disappointed with the politicians who claimed to be followers of Martí's ideals thought that if Martí returned to life and took control of affairs, things would run better in the Republic of Cuba.[79] The cult of Martí fostered in Cuba a longing for a leader who reflected the public perception of Martí—idealistic, honest, and charismatic—who would take charge over the arguments of congressmen, the struggles for funds by municipal assemblies, and the pervasive malfeasance of public funds by public servants at all levels of government in the Republic.

This pervasive longing for a Martí "Messiah" had a popular musical expression in the lyrics that Emelio V. Villillo wrote in the first decade of the Republic for the song called "Clave a Martí," whose second strophe said: "Si Martí no hubiera muerto/otro gallo cantaría,/la patria se salvaría/y Cuba sería feliz/¡ay! muy feliz" ("If Martí had not died/someone else would be running the roost/the fatherland would be safe/and Cuba would be happy/yes, very happy").[80] Intellectuals like those in the *Grupo Minorista* in the 1930s, and those who collaborated with the poet José Lezama Lima in the publication of the literary journal *Orígenes*, shared that popular feeling. The only discordant voice in that choir was the Marxist author Juan Marinello, who in 1934 wrote in his article "Martí y Lenin" that Martí's political ideas had been superseded by those of Vladimir Ilich Lenin.[81] Eventually, Marinello became a Martí scholar with nothing but praise for the *Apóstol*. According to Raimundo Menocal and Ottmar Ete, it is the vagueness of Martí's political pronouncements (the very vagueness criticized by Marinello), that made him an inspiration to individuals advocating dissimilar political and economic theories.[82] Because of the Cult of José Martí, children of the Cuban diaspora are taught to worship him, and historians unfamiliar with José Antonio Saco and Carlos Manuel de Céspedes call José Martí the Father of the Cuban Nation.

The Return of Batista, and the Opposition against Him: 1952–1958

On March 10, 1952, General Batista and accomplices in the Cuban military staged a successful coup d'état, and expelled President Carlos Prío Socarrás from Cuba. There were protests against this act of force, but the immediate recognition by the United States of the Batista regime brought many in Cuba to accept it, too. After a brief economic crisis brought about by the uncertainty that followed the coup d'état, the Cuban economy estabilized and began to grow. Cuban political parties were not disbanded by Batista, and he did not confiscate all means of communications. Thus, opposition to him was kept alive by people like Ramón Grau San Martín and the *Ortodoxo* Party leader Emilio (Millo) Ochoa.[83]

In the 1950s, tourism became a major industry in Cuba, and because most of the hotels built in Havana at this time had gambling operations, organized crime became associated with it. Hollywood movies such as *The Godfather II* and books such as T. J. English's *Havana Nocturne. How the Mob Owned Cuba—and then Lost It to the Revolution* have given credence to allegations by spokesmen and supporters of the Cuban Revolutionary Government that succeeded General Batista that what it overthrew was a criminal state run by organized crime.[84] Since the era of Prohibition in the United States (from 1920 to 1933), Cuba served as a source of contraband alcohol for its northern neighbor, and in the 1950s members of US organized crime invested in casino hotels in Havana. But the Cuban economy was too large and diversified to be owned by a few American mafia families, even in association with a corrupt President. In contrast to that commonly held view, Eduardo Sánchez Rooner concludes in an in-depth study of drug trafficking, smuggling and gambling in Cuba from the 1920s to the 1950s that the expansion of casinos in Havana in the 1950s did not derive from the presence of the US mafia, but accorded with Cuban government policies to stimulate tourism in order to compensate for the fluctuations in sugar prices on the international marked.[85]

President Batista provoked a wave of criticism in 1953 with his brutal repression of the failed attack on the Moncada Army barracks in Santiago de Cuba on July 26 that year, planned by the lawyer Fidel Castro Ruz.[86] Castro was tried and imprisoned in 1953, but in 1955 his sentence was commuted to deportation, and he left Cuba for Mexico. In 1954 Batista announced that he was going to hold elections, and that the new government resulting from those elections was going to restore the Constitution of 1940. But at those elections, on November 1, 1954, he ran uncontested, and although there was economic prosperity in 1954 and 1955, political tension continued in Cuba.[87] In December of 1956, Fidel Castro returned to Cuba with an armed group of followers who called themselves the "26th of July Movement," and established a revolutionary hold in the Sierra Maestra mountain range in the southeastern region of the island. In the following two years many Cubans in cities and towns joined the 26th of July Movement, and as civilian followers, they raised funds and purchased weapons in urban centers for the armed rebels in the countryside.

In 1957, Batista said that he was not going to stand at elections scheduled to take place in 1958, and leaders of the *Ortodoxo* Party, for example Emilio

(Millo) Ochoa and Carlos Márquez Stérling, agreed to participate in them. Ramón Grau San Martín and radio writer José Pardo Llada also agreed to participate in those elections.[88] Early in 1958, Fidel Castro proposed a scheme for the establishment of a regular government in the Sierra Maestra that was rejected by the political leaders. Throughout 1957 and 1958, the Batista regime tried to dislodge the rebels from their mountain holdout, and hunted their underground supporters in Cuban cities and towns. The brutality of the repression methods of Batista's army and police (bombing large areas of the Sierra where the rebels were suspected to be hiding, and torturing and murdering people suspected of being their collaborators in cities and towns) increased the number of people of all classes who wanted Batista to go.

A movement of Cuban civic men who wanted to bring back political legality to Cuba came into being. The Catholic Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba, Enrique Pérez Serantes, was a vocal critic of crimes committed by the agents of the Batista regime. Many members of the youth branch of Catholic Action (*Juventud de Acción Católica*) were active supporters of the 26th of July Movement, and other organizations opposed to the Batista regime, like the university students group called *Directorio Estudiantil Revolucionario*. Political leaders and groups who had been reluctant to support Fidel Castro when he returned to Cuba from exile in 1956 and began his armed rebellion in Sierra Maestra decided to work with the revolutionary leader after Batista's rigging of the November 1, 1958 elections in order to ascertain the victory to the presidency of his candidate, Andrés Rivero Agüero.[89] Arguably, Batista's coup d'état of 1952, and his attempt to eliminate peaceful legal political alternatives, pushed those who wanted to bring back democracy and end political corruption in Cuba into supporting Fidel Castro's revolutionary movement, and facilitated the establishment of the Revolutionary Government in 1959.[90]

Because they were so few (and so poorly equipped), the success of the group of revolutionaries who disembarked in Cuba with Castro in December 1956 and established their stronghold in the Sierra Maestra mountains seems miraculous. But an analysis of events in Cuba between 1956 and 1958 makes two points clear: first, Castro and his followers were not so much successful leaders of an armed movement as they were masterful manipulators of images; second, they were the beneficiaries of general unrest against a regime whose brutal tactics alienated people in all sectors of the population in Cuba. In 1957, Herbert Matthews, reporter of the *New York Times*, interviewed Fidel Castro in the mountains of eastern Cuba. He wrote that on his way to meet Fidel, he saw hundreds of rebels.[91] What he failed to notice was that the hundreds that he saw pass him by were a small group led by Raúl Castro passing back and forth.[92]

Matthews's interview of Fidel Castro, and his favorable comments about him and his revolutionary movement were published in the *New York Times*, and filtered down to the Cuban news media. These favorable comments about Fidel Castro and his followers from a reputable foreign source convinced many who were undecided to oppose Batista, and his comments about the strength and size of the rebel forces frightened the ill-paid Cuban armed forces that were sent to defeat them. Although there were some memorable armed encounters between

the rebels and the Cuban armed forces, they were few. Acts of sabotage and political assassinations by opponents of the Batista regime in Cuban cities and towns were more effective. These acts of terrorism in cities and towns demoralized the Cuban armed forces, even as they repressed the students and members of political organizations whom they identified as the perpetrators. The brutal acts of repression by armed and police forces increased the number of opponents to General Batista's illegal regime among the Cuban elites, and on July 20, 1958, members of several Cuban opposition groups met with representatives of Fidel Castro in Caracas, and signed an agreement to work together for the overthrow of the Batista regime.

By the end of 1958, General Batista was facing opposition from all sectors in Cuban society. On March 14, 1958, the US government had suspended the supply of weapons and ammunition that he needed to attack the 26th of July Movement rebels in the mountains of eastern Cuba. This decision was made by US President Dwight Eisenhower, and it had the effect of depriving the Batista regime not only of weapons, but also of legitimity. The loss of the United States as a neighborly supplier of military equipment was perceived in Cuba as a show of disapproval of the Batista regime by the US government, and on that account it was like a death sentence for it. Despite its cultural achievements, the development of its political institutions, and the recovery of the means of production by Cubans between 1902 and 1958, the Republic of Cuba was not a completely independent nation state: first, because of its ties to the US economy, and second, because of the widespread perception among the Cuban people and its elites that in Cuba nothing could succeed if the United States did not approve of it.

General Batista fled Cuba on New Year's Eve 1958, because he had lost the support both of the government of the United States and of the significant sector of the Cuban upper middle classes that had allowed him to rule Cuba since 1952. Batista did not leave anyone to succeed him, and because of this power vacuum, on January 1, 1959, Fidel Castro and his followers were able to march down from the mountains of Sierra Maestra into the towns of the plain to seize control of them, and to place supporters in positions of command. Abandoned by its Commander-in-Chief, the demoralized Batista government armed forces surrendered to the armed rebels without firing a shot.

Notes

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Figure 4.1 Portrait of "Che" Guevara on the Façade of the Ministry of the Interior in Havana.

Source: Photograph by Andrea Brizzi.

4 The Making of a Socialist Republic

Cuba between 1959 and 2008

From Nationalist Leader to Self-Proclaimed Marxist: Fidel Castro and Cuba: 1959–1961

Fidel Alejandro Castro Ruz was the son of Angel Castro, a wealthy Spanish-born landowner and of a Cuban, Lina Ruz. Fidel was born in 1926 in the village of Birán, near the northern coast of eastern Cuba. He and his brother Raúl were sent to schools run by the Jesuit Fathers: first in Santiago, and later in Havana. According to a popular biographer, during his years at the Jesuit Colegio Belén, in Havana, Fidel read avidly works by contemporary political leaders, including Benito Mussolini, Adolf Hitler, and José Antonio Primo de Rivera. In 1945, he entered law school at the University of Havana, where he seemed more interested in political student organizations than in the study of law. In 1947 he became involved in an abortive expedition from Cuba's Cayo Confites to the Dominican Republic, to overthrow dictator Rafael L. Trujillo. While at the University of Havana, he married Mirta Díaz-Balart, member of a wealthy family from eastern Cuba close to General Batista. Luis Aguilar, a school mate from Santiago, told Fidel biographer Georgie Ann Geyer that the future revolutionary leader was receptive to Gustavo Pittaluga's *Diálogos sobre el Destino*, known in Cuba before its publication through and abridged version read in the radio program Universidad del Aire, while he, Aguilar, had doubted that French-speaking Haiti or English-speaking Jamaica would ever accept Spanish Cuba as their leader.[1]

In 1952, Castro was running for congressman as a candidate of the Ortodoxo Party, when Batista's coup d'état took place. He joined the opposition to Batista, and on July 26, 1953, he led the suicidal attack on the Moncada Army barracks, outside Santiago de Cuba, mentioned in the previous chapter. After being captured, he barely escaped being killed on the spot, thanks to the intercession of Enrique Pérez Serantes, the Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba, who arrived in the nick of time.[2] Castro was tried and condemned to 15 years in prison for his responsibility in the Moncada Barracks attack, but in 1955 his sentence was commuted, and he left Cuba for Mexico. In Mexico, he joined his brother Raúl, and he met the Argentinean medical doctor and Marxist agitator Ernesto Guevara.

Ernesto Guevara was born in Rosario, Argentina, on June 14, 1928 into a well-to-do family. At a young age, he took a tour of South America that exposed him to the poor living conditions of the majority of the population, and to the dramatic socio-economic inequalities in that continent; this tour led him to embrace a Marxist worldview. In 1952, he left Argentina for Bolivia, and then Guatemala. Guevara lived in Guatemala until 1954, when a military coup d'état deposed Guatemalan President Jacobo Arbenz under the allegations that he wanted to establish a communist regime in Guatemala. He was in Mexico fleeing from the repression against sympathizers of the Arbenz regime unleashed in Guatemala after that coup when he met the Castro brothers.[3] Ernesto Guevara became close to Raúl Castro, and Fidel Castro listened to his advice. It was in Mexico that the Cubans began calling him "Che."

While living in exile in Mexico from 1955 to 1956, Fidel Castro visited the United States of America to meet Cuban opponents of the Batista regime exiled in this country, and to collect from them funds for an armed expedition to Cuba to overthrow the regime of their common enemy. Raúl Castro encountered in Mexico a friend whom he had met in 1953 on the ship he was in his return to Cuba from a Communist World Youth festival in Bucharest, the Russian foreign service officer Nikolai Leonov. He introduced Leonov to Fidel and to Guevara.[4] In Mexico the Castro brothers organized the group of 80 men, including Ernesto Guevara, who landed on the southern coast of eastern Cuba on December 2, 1956 aboard the yacht "Granma." The money collected by Fidel from Cubans exiled in the United States because of Batista was used to pay for armaments and munitions. One can only speculate whether or not Raul's re-established connection with Leonov had any influence in the objectives of that expedition.

The armed resistance to General Batista had been justified by his illegal seizure of power and his unwillingness to hold free elections in Cuba. Given those circumstance, it was puzzling that Fidel Castro, at the rallies that took place during his cross-country march from the mountains of eastern Cuba to Havana in January 1959, asked the crowds if they wanted elections. Invariably the excited crowds would reply, "No." After Fidel Castro arrived in Havana, he met with leaders of other groups in the opposition to Batista and of political parties, an all agreed to postpone presidential elections. Although several political groups had resisted Batista, by the middle of 1959, Fidel Castro and a group of members of the 26th of July Movement Party close to him—including his brother Raúl, Camilo Cienfuegos, and Ernesto Guevara—had been able to obtain control of all government institutions, and to replace the regular armed forces with new armed forces drawn from their armed followers. Before the end of 1959, in a show of solidarity for the creation of a new order, all Cuban political parties disbanded, with the exception of the Communist Party, which at that time was called *Partido Socialista Popular* (PSP). Members of the disbanded parties participated in the provisional revolutionary government that came into being, but they did so as individuals without institutional support.

When Fidel Castro reached Havana, he delegated Carlos Franqui, director of Radio Rebelde, the clandestine radio station of the 26th of July Movement,

to found a newspaper to be mouthpiece of the Movement, and the latter founded *Revolución*. But private media had already begun, unrequested, a publicity campaign for Castro and his Movement, and by the time he reached Havana he had national attention.[5] During the first months of 1959 there was masive support for Fidel Castro and his 26th of July Movement at all levels in the economic and social scale of the Cuban population, because he was seen as a nationalistic leader who wanted his country to be truly independent. Although by the second half of that year an increasing number of early supporters began to find him too autocratic, or were wary of the inclusion of Communists from the *Partido Socialista Popular* in the institutions of the Revolutionary Government, a majority of Cubans continued to think of Fidel and the 26th of July Movement to be the embodiment of the revolution against Batista.

If we accept that the majority of the Cuban people in 1959 were willing to forego the formal elements of a representative republic (elements that had been discredited on the island since 1902), and if we assume that this majority was willing to follow unconditionally a young leader who professed the ideal of a truly independent and prosperous Cuba, then it is not unrealistic to trace Castro's success (at least partially) to the influence of the cult of José Martí—a cult that had developed since the 1920s, and which had fostered a longing for a charismatic leader. Cuban politicians after the 1920s adopted a populist rhetoric, and used phrases from Martí's poems and his best-known speeches; but once elected to office, they consistently disappointed the electorate—abusing the privileges of their office, and becoming corrupt for financial gain. In January 1959 Fidel Castro draped himself in the mantle of José Martí rhetoric, just like those politicians, but he rejected the trappings of the supreme public office. Refusing to become President of Cuba, he adopted instead a simple lifestyle and dress code. According to Antonio José Ponte, poets such as José Lezama Lima and Cintio Vitier shared with Fidel Castro the ideals of national dignity, honesty in public office, and self-sacrifice for the common good—goals that Castro proferred in his speeches throughout 1959—and considered his arrival in Havana as if it were the "Return of José Martí."[6] Like Lezama Lima and Vitier, many intellectuals and artists were Fidel Castro supporters during the first three years after the departure of General Batista.

Several months before the General's flight, US President Dwight Eisenhower had begun to distance his country from the Batista government. In 1959, President Eisenhower showed a willingness to work with the new regime in Cuba. On April 5, Fidel Castro visited the United States, invited to Washington D.C. by the National Press Club. During that visit he was accompanied by a delegation that included prominent Cuban entrepreneurs Daniel Bacardí and José Bosch.[7] But President Eisenhower was displeased with the radical economic policies espoused by the Cuban Revolutionary Government. This was particularly true of the agrarian reform law issued and implemented on May 18, 1959, which included the confiscation without compensation of American-owned estates. Late in 1959, Eisenhower authorized the Central Intelligence Agency to begin preparations for the Revolutionary Government's overthrow. In September 1960,

Fidel Castro visited New York to address the United Nations. His second trip to the United States was different to the first. In his address to the General Assembly he criticized the United States, and in New York he met Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev.[8]

On October 19, 1960, President Eisenhower imposed a trade embargo on Cuba.[9] The trade embargo on Cuba, still enforced in 2016, meant only that US citizens and corporations were forbidden to trade with Cuba. But, given that the United States was Cuba's main foreign trade partner in 1960, this measure was meant to make the Cuban economy collapse. The Cuban economy did not collapse, however, because by 1960 Cuba had become mostly self-sufficient in food production, able at least to feed its population. Capitalist countries such as Canada and Spain continued trading with Cuba. Further, the Cuban National Treasury had extensive reserves of foreign exchange (specifically, US dollars) in the Cuban National Reserve Bank. These reserves allowed the Cuban Revolutionary Government to purchase (through European countries) enough industrial and capital goods (including parts for US-made machinery) to maintain its infrastructure until it began to receive financial and technical support from the Soviet Union.

On January 3, 1961, the United States broke diplomatic relations with Cuba. Protective powers were appointed to represent each country in the capital of the other. The United States was represented by Switzerland in Havana, and the Cubans by Czechoslovakia in Washington, D.C. In April 1961, the recently elected President of the United States, John F. Kennedy, gave his approval to execute the plan to overthrow the Cuban Revolutionary Government which had begun under President Eisenhower. An army of Cuban exiles was trained by CIA officers in Panama to invade Cuba with air support from the US Air Force.[10] The army of Cuban exiles landed in Cuba on April 17, 1961, but it was not given the USAF air support essential for its success, and it could not advance beyond the beach where it had landed before it was surrounded. The readiness of the Cuban Revolutionary army to locate the point where the expedition had landed (at Playa Girón, on the Bay of Pigs, in southern Central Cuba) suggests that the Cubans knew the invasion plans. Both the embargo and the Playa Girón invasion failed to overthrow the Cuban Revolutionary Government. Instead, they made even loyal opposition seem an act of treason in favor of foreign intervention in Cuban affairs.

On December 2, 1961, Fidel Castro declared himself a Marxist-Leninist, and proceeded to sign commercial treaties with Warsaw Pact nations, thus integrating Cuba into the hegemonic sphere of the Soviet Union. Many analysts of Cuban political history, such as Marifeli Pérez-Stable, have interpreted this as a desperate act of self-preservation by Fidel Castro, provoked by the hostility of the US government.[11] This was the opinion expressed by Raúl Castro's Russian friend, former KGB officer General Nikolai Leonov in a conference that he delivered at the Centro de Estudios Públicos in Santiago de Chile on September 23, 1998: Fidel Castro was not a Communist, but he was forced to turn for protection to the Soviet Union by acts of aggression from the United States like the Playa Girón invasion.[12] Indeed, a popular biographer of Fidel

Castro conducted hundreds of interviews of people who had known him in his early years, and none of her interviewees gave evidence of an earlier advocacy of Marxism by him. At the University of Havana Fidel befriended several Communist students, including Alfredo Guevara, but he never joined the Communist Party himself.[13]

On the other hand, analysts such as Lionel Martin consider that Fidel Castro was a Marxist revolutionary from the beginning of his struggle against the Batista government.[14] Tad Szulc corroborates that before the Revolution Fidel had virtually no contact with the Communist Party leadership, but that he became a convert to Marxism in his own way, and in his own time. Szulc considers it a telling fact that Castro refrained from using words like Marxism or socialism in his public speeches as a student leader at the University of Havana, and as a political leader before 1961; but conversely, he never attacked socialism or communism. His conclusion is that Castro embraced communism only after he controlled political life in Cuba, and it was not possible for the Cuban Communist Party (PSP) to control him. He made use of his communist University of Havana friends (although none of them participated in the armed struggled against Batista) by giving them important assignments, while giving to members of that party's leadership mostly positions that were merely decorative.[15]

The debate over whether Fidel Castro became a communist because of US opposition to his revolutionary aims bypasses an important question: specifically, whether in 1959 the US government would have accepted a non-communist regime in Cuba that implemented the social and economic changes proposed by Fidel Castro in his self-defense before Cuban tribunals in 1953, known as *History Will Absolve Me*.[16] As William Appleman Williams wrote in 1962, "Castro's politics were strictly Jacobin, and the Cuban Constitution of 1940 is anything but a middle-class document."[17] Given the hostility of the US government and of the occurrence of serious acts of sabotage in Cuba, for example the blowing up of the French cargo ship *La Coubre* at Havana harbor on March 4, 1960, it may be argued that the Cuban Revolutionary Government had to make an alliance with a strong power willing to protect Cuba under a revolutionary regime. But even considering the need for Soviet protection, it might not have been necessary for the Revolutionary Government to have adopted radical communist economics (state socialism), and a radical communist restructuring of society (abolition of all private associations, the monopoly of education, and the adoption of militant atheistic policies). Fidel Castro might have become a non-communist Soviet client, like Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser. Carlos Franqui, a loyal supporter of Fidel Castro and the 26th of July Movement for many years, believes in the possibility at that time of establishing a social democratic government in Cuba, because of the across classes and population sectors support enjoyed by the Revolutionary Government, and considers unnecessary the adoption by Cuba of a Russian model.[18]

On February 4, 1962, ten months after the victory of the Revolutionary Government at Playa Girón, Castro gave a speech now called the Second Havana

Declaration. This address was more than a declaration of Cuban independence from the United States. This address was a proclamation of his intention to make of Cuba a role model of defiance and resistance to US influence for other nations in the Americas.[19] Any realistic planning for achieving the mission that Fidel Castro envisioned for Cuba in this declaration made it necessary for Cuba to become more than a client of the global counterpart of the United States. Carlos Franqui cites in his *Diary of the Cuban Revolution* a letter of Fidel Castro to his friend and advisor Celia Sánchez dated June 5, 1958, where Fidel tells her (after an air raid of Sierra Maestra by the Batista government air force with shells whose rocket heads had been provided by the US Naval Base at Guantanamo as replacenment for defective ones sent before President Eisenhower stopped US military aid to Batista earlier in that year) that he had sworn that the Americans were going to pay dearly for what they were doing, and that after the war against Batista was over he was going to fight against them. If Fidel Castro had decided by that date to confront the United States, then it could be argued that Tad Szulc's claims that Fidel and his brother Raúl had planned to become allied with the Soviet Union in the early months of 1959 are true, and that Fidel provoked a conflict with the United States in order to claim for Cuba the victim role, and to bring the Soviet Union to its aid in that conflict.[20]

Additional agrarian reform laws followed the first reform law of 1959. The first agrarian reform law confiscated large landholdings owned by foreign corporations and citizens, but in the case of Cuban nationals, it mostly trimmed the landholdings of latifundia owners, and distributed the confiscated land among landless tenants, share-croppers, and journeymen. The ensuing agrarian reform laws affected Cubans, from wealthy absentee landowners to middle-size farmers, some of whom rose up in arms in Central Cuba. The preference shown by the Revolutionary Government for members of the Communist Party when making government and armed forces appointments brought about vocal opposition from civic and military leaders by 1960; and the marginalization of Catholics in academia and in government agencies created many patriotic, nationalist, anti-communist dissenters in Cuba. Many dissidents left Cuba, because they were threatened or perceived that they were, and most of them sought refuge in the United States. Thus, the Revolutionary Government was successful in convincing public opinion in Cuba and abroad, presenting its critics as agents of the United States. After this country established its economic embargo in 1960, and organized the Playa Girón landing in 1961, the Cuban Revolutionary Government was able to present itself as little David against the giant Goliath in an uneven struggle to preserve Cuba's independence from the imperialism of the United States, and to stigmatize all its opponents as tools of that colossal foreign power.

In 1959 the revolutionary movement that brought about the destabilization of the Batista government and his flight from Cuba included many groups with a wide variety of political points of view. They included the group of anti-Batista exiles in the United States led by former President Carlos Prío Socarrás; the student group Directorio Revolucionario; the armed group in the mountains of

Central Cuba known as Segundo Frente del Escambray; and Fidel Castro's own 26th of July Movement, which included supporters and perpetrators of acts of sabotage in Cuban cities and towns (the Llano) and guerrillas active in the mountains of eastern Cuba. A late-comer to this group was the *Partido Socialista Popular*. In late 1958 all these groups came to an agreement to work together in the liberation of Cuba from Batista, and in the process of national reconstruction after his demise (known as the Caracas Pact) which gave leadership to Fidel Castro, but designated the lawyer Manuel Urrutia as President of a provisional government that ought to be established immediately after Batista was overthrown. Batista's flight on New Year's Eve of that year without leaving a clear successor government facilitated the assumption of leadership by Fidel Castro and his 26th of July Movement. Fidel's charismatic gifts (and the organization of the 26th of July Movement) were not matched by any other of the power contenders. Tad Szulc observed in his biography of Fidel that looking back at Fidelism's trajectory, it is evident that he had organized a revolutionary movement totally lacking in internal democracy.[21] This assertion is illustrated by Fidel's unilateral decision as soon as he learned of Batista's fligh to order members of his 26th of July Movement to occupy military barracks and police stations in Cuban cities and towns.

From Santiago, Fidel Castro negotiated the surrender of the Columbia armed forces barracks and of other fortresses in Havana to his trusted officers Camilo Cienfuegos and Che Guevara. Once in Havana, he assured his military supremacy over the newly formed provisional government by successfully opposing the desire of Manuel Urrutia, the President of the provisional Revolutionaty Government, to keep the old Cuban Army, arguing that all members of the armed forces active during the Batista government were war criminals.[22] Franqui recalls in his memoirs how, in those January 1959 days, when the topic on everyone's lips was the execution by firing squad of war criminals, Fidel convoked the people at the National Palace, and there he asked the multitude if they agreed that war criminals should be shot, and a colossal "Yes!" resounded as the answer to his question.[23] The dissolution of the traditional political parties in January 1959 had left civilians in the provisional government without an institutional support. Early in 1959 the Segundo Frente del Escambray guerrilla merged with the 26th of July Movement armed forces. In 1960 the Directorio, the 26th of July Movement, and the *Partido Socialista Popular* began to be referreed as *Organizaciones Revolucionarias Integradas* (ORI), and on July 26, 1961, at a great national assembly, Fidel Castro called those present to show by raising their hands if they supported the union of all revolutionaries into a *Partido Unido de la Revolución Socialista*. At which everyone present, including Dr. Castro, raised their hands, and his will was done.[24]

The concentration of power in the hands of the 26th of July Movement and of its leader during the first three months of 1959 was made possible partly by the media campaign that presented them as the sole representatives of a national resistance to the Batista dictatorship in the past, and of a new nationalist project for the future according to the ideals of José Martí. Forerunner of this campaign was *Radio Rebelde*, and after January 1959 the newspaper *Revolución*. But inde-

pendent news publications, and radio and television stations, participated enthusiastically in this effort. The national circulation weekly magazine *Bohemia*, published by Miguel Angel Quevedo, was a purveyor of the myth that identified Fidel as the Revolution, and supporting him as the duty of all Cubans.[25] The *Concentración Campesina*, a convening in Havana of thousands of Cuban men from the countryside who were hosted by city dwellers, was a media coup for Fidel Castro, because his address to the visitors had a national impact that was not possible in Cuba at that time through radio and television. After that event, there would be someone who had seen Fidel and believed in him even in the remotest corners of Cuba. During the latter half of 1959, mass rallies established a "good versus bad" paradigm in public discourse, reducing questions of the government's ideological direction to the most basic concepts of right and wrong; political pluralism came to be seen as a liability, and criticism came to be considered akin to treason.[26]

Lillian Guerra has written a gripping analysis of the process of silencing many of the voices that were present at the beginning of the Cuban Revolution of 1959 in her book *Visions of Power in Cuba. Revolution, Redemption, and Resistance, 1959–1971* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012). In November of 1959, the imprisonment of Commander Huber Matos and former top leaders of the Llano faction ended loyal criticism in the 26th of July Movement; in December of that year, the attempt to manipulate elections to the leadership of the National Federation of Sugar Workers was the beginning of the end for independent labor unions in Cuba; in February 1960, a group of Havana University students were condemned by Rolando Cubela, President of the Federation of University Students as "divisionist," because they had protested against the laying of a wreath of flowers at the monument of José Martí in Havana by Soviet Vice Premier Anastas Mikoyan, alleging that Martí would have been insulted by this homage from the representative of a government that oppressed its people; in mid-July of 1960, the Revolutionary Government revoked the autonomous status of the University of Havana.[27]

All the incidents mentioned above were reactions to anti-Communist demonstrations in the rebel army, labor unions, and at the University of Havana, which the Revolutionary Government considered to be anti-revolutionary, because they could give justification to US intervention in Cuba under the pretense of preventing a Communist take over. This argument was disingenuous, because in no instance did it give serious consideration to the concerns of the protesters despite their credentials as supporters of the revolution and participants in the struggle against Batista. As Dr. Guerra has said, "By discrediting the content of protests as anti-Cuban in a context of US-backed armed attacks, Fidel called on supporters to surrender the right to unarmed protest and verbal dissent."[28] Concerning the specific case of the students demonstrating in February 1960 against the laying of a wreath of flowers at the monument to José Martí by Anastas Mikoyan, it may be argued that by expressing their ideas and invoking Jose Martí in their defense, those students had insulted Fidel Castro twice: showing an opinion of their own different to

his, and doing so in the name of Martí, the fulfiller of whose legacy he claimed to be.[29]

From January to May of 1960, a rash of unprecedented attacks on national newspapers swept Cuba, reflected in newspaper burnings and newspaper offices takeovers. This struggle for control over political discourse culminated in May of that year, when the conservative newspaper *El Diario de la Marina*, and the liberal newspaper *Prensa Libre* were taken over allegedly by workers, ending with the transformation of traditional spaces for protest, such as public plazas and the national media into extensions of the state.[30] Between 1962 and 1967, the collaboration of citizens with state edicts and goals forged a system of power that could be described as a grassroots dictatorship. This system succeeded because the state invited citizens to be agents of their own surveillance through the national organization of committees for the defense of the revolution.[31]

As indicated above, in 1960 national distribution newspapers like *El Diario de la Marina*, and *Prensa Libre* were forced to close. Also in that year, the weekly *Bohemia* came under government control, and all radio and television stations were taken over by the Revolutionary Government.[32] In the summer of 1961, the Cuban Revolutionary Government confiscated all private schools in Cuba, and forbade private teaching. By a succession of decrees, all non-governmental associations were declared illegal (including international clubs such as the Rotaries, and institutions such as freemasonry).

Christian churches had their activities limited to the confines of church buildings, and atheism began to be taught at schools. Membership of Churches and Church-related associations (such as Catholic Action) was discouraged by unwritten rules, such as denying admission to academic institutions to people who openly practiced their religion, and refusing them promotions. The arbitrary application of those rules made them more effective: since they were not part of a written code, they could not be challenged; and because there were exceptions in their application, their existence could be denied. But these anti-religious policies encountered little opposition, because they were addressed not so much against personal religious beliefs as against membership of organized religions. Since the time of the anti-clerical policies of the Spanish Liberal governments in the 1830s, the Catholic Church had ceased being a powerful institution in Cuba. Furthermore, in 1959 most priests serving in Cuba were Spaniards, which made it appear in some Cubans' eyes as a colonial institution. The Protestant churches had been introduced in Cuba mostly by missionaries from the United States or by Cubans who had become Protestant in that country, and their social influence in Cuba was weakened by this association to the country that the Cuban Revolutionary Government accused of being an imperialist power intent on invading Cuba and depriving Cubans of their independence.

From Provisional Government to Established Socialist Republic: 1961–1990

In January 1959, Fidel Castro and other prominent members of the opposition to President Batista established a provisional government for Cuba at Havana. The President of this government was Manuel Urrutia, a judge known for having supported in 1958 the constitutional right of Castro and his followers to overthrow the illegal Batista regime.[33] In February 1959, Fidel accepted nomination as Prime Minister of this provisional government, with the condition that he would preside at cabinet meetings. President Urrutia accepted, and he was not thereafter present at cabinet meetings, and retained only nominal veto over decrees.[34] In June of that year President Urrutia made comments critical of the Communist Party that brought him into conflict with Fidel, and he resigned. After spending some time under house arrest, Urrutia took refuge in the Embassy of Venezuela.[35] Another lawyer, Osvaldo Dorticós, was named President to succeed Urrutia. President Dorticós stayed in office until 1976, signing the decrees presented to him by a cabinet controlled by Fidel.[36]

On February 7, 1959, the provisional government of Cuba approved what was called a fundamental law of the Republic, abrogating the Cuban Constitution of 1940, and vesting legislative power in the cabinet, which alone could change that fundamental law.[37] President Urrutia agreed with Fidel Castro that there should not be elections in Cuba for 18 months, and one of the first decrees issued by the cabinet was the dissolution of the Cuban Congress that operated under President Batista as a shadow of a legislative power.[38] Because no legislature was created, the Cuban Revolutionary Government, consisting of the President and the cabinet (presided over by Prime Minister Fidel Castro) governed Cuba by decree until 1976, when a Constitution of Cuba was approved by a popular referendum.[39] The cabinet included Raúl Castro, Ernesto (Che) Guevara, and others close to Fidel Castro, such as Haidée Santamaría and her husband, Armando Hart. Celia Sánchez, Fidel Castros's secretary and constant companion, attended the meetings of that cabinet.[40]

The Cuban Constitution of 1976 contains articles pertaining to the organization and functioning of state organs, including a National Assembly of People's Power. At the same time as the new constitution of Cuba was adopted, the administrative division of the island was changed dramatically. Fourteen provinces were drawn from the six old provinces, by recombining their municipal districts. According to the Cuban Constitution of 1976, the National Assembly of People's Power elects from among its deputies, the Council of State, which consists of one President, one First Vice-President, five Vice-Presidents, one Secretary, and 23 other members.[41] The Council of State functions when the National Assembly is not in session. The National Assembly decides on the constitutionality of legislation; the Supreme Court and the other courts are subordinate to the National Assembly, and the Council of State. Fidel Castro was the uncontested candidate for President from 1976 until his resignation from that office to his brother Raúl Castro in 2007.

In 1965 a new Cuban Communist Party came into being. This new Communist Party is a reconfiguration of the *Partido Unido de la Revolucion Socialista* (PURS) created in 1961 as a merger of the 26th of July Movement, the old Cuban Communist Party founded by Carlos Baliño and Julio Antonio Mella in 1925 (known as the PSP), and other integrated revolutionary organizations. Article 5 of the Cuban Constitution of 1976 defines it as the leading force of society and of the state, and from its foundation the position of First Secretary of the Party has been held by the same person occupying the position of President of Cuba. The leading bodies of the Cuban Communist Party are the Politburo and the Secretariat. Despite its stated importance, the CCP has held only six congresses in its 50 years of existence, but its Central Committee have met between Party congresses, and it elects the Politburo. Its essential organizational framework and operating principles (the Party Statutes) were drafted before the First Congress was convened by the Party leadership in 1975. The Party Statutes were adopted during the First Congress.[42] In 1969, the Cuban Communist Party had 55,000 members or only 0.7 percent of the total population, but by 1985 it had 520,000 members. In 1999, Dalbir Singh considered the Cuban Communist Party to be central to the political stability of Cuba.[43]

The Call to Global Revolution

From its very beginning, the Cuban Revolutionary Government sought extra-territorial projection. In 1959, expeditions to overthrow dictators in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Nicaragua, were organized in Cuba.[44] Foreign intellectuals and artists, particularly from Latin America, were invited to Cuba, where they were entertained and honored. Cuba created its own press agency, Prensa Latina, with the assistance of the Argentinean Marxists Alejandro Mazetti and Ricardo Walsh. In 1961, the cultural organization Casa de las Américas was created to foster inter-cultural relations with Latin America, and its annual literary prizes eventually had an impact in the global recognition of Latin American literature known as "the Boom."[45] After 1961, Cuba established cultural relations with the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries; this activity included research and student exchanges, and cooperation in projects such as the film *I Am Cuba*, directed by Soviet director Mikhail Kalatozov (whose script was co-authored by the Soviet poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko and the Cuban poet Enrique Pineda Barnet). Cuba hosted international conferences where countries from what was called the Third World were honored; eventually, it succeeded in being considered a leader of non-aligned nations, despite its commercial and diplomatic alignment with the Soviet Union and the socialist countries of Eastern Europe, Africa, and Asia.[46]

In October 1962, the world was surprised to learn that at the invitation of the Cuban Revolutionary Government leader himself, the Soviet Union had introduced nuclear missiles into Cuba. The crisis that ensued brought the United States and the Soviet Union close to a collision. But the two world powers came to an agreement: US President John F. Kennedy agreed to withdraw missiles in Turkey facing the Soviet Union, and committed the government of the United

States to never again invade Cuba, nor to allow acts of aggression against the Cuban Revolutionary Government to originate on US soil. In exchange, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev agreed to withdraw Soviet missiles from Cuba, against the protests of Fidel Castro.[47]

The missile crisis of October 1962 provided the United States with an argument to ask for the expulsion of Cuba from the Organization of American States (OAS). It convinced all OAS members (excepting Mexico) that Cuba ought to be expelled from this Pan-American organization because of its support of armed groups in Venezuela and Colombia trying to overthrow the elected governments of those countries, and because of its armed alliance with a European power that had brought atomic weapons to the Caribbean. In the 53 years ensuing, however, all the American nations that voted then for the expulsion of Cuba from the OAS and broke diplomatic relations with the Cuban Revolutionary Government made peace with it, except for the United States.[48] The survival of the Cuban Revolutionary Government after this challenge to US hegemony in the Americas brought to it the admiration of all those nation states who felt belittled or bullied by the most powerful nation in the Americas, and it may well have inspired many Cubans with national pride. By welcoming to Cuba missiles from the USSR, the Cuban Revolutionary Government rejected the Monroe Doctrine, the unilateral declaration made by President James Monroe in 1823 stating that European powers could not establish or expand their influence in the Americas—a doctrine invoked by US presidents.

Although the well-known activities of Ernesto Guevara promoting revolution in Latin America from 1965 to 1967 (ending with his death in Bolivia) are important in the history of the global revolution mission of the Cuban Revolutionary Government, the most ambitious campaigns of the Cuban Revolutionary Government in the name of the international solidarity of peoples for global revolution took place in western Africa from 1975 to 1988. In 1975 Cuba intervened in Angola to support the leftist People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) against US-backed intervention by South Africa and the People's Republic of Congo. South Africa and the People's Republic of Congo supported, each, one of two other liberation movements competing for power in that country during its struggle for independence from Portugal (the National Liberation Front of Angola, and the National Union for Total Independence of Angola). In 1988, Cuban troops intervened again to avert military disaster for the leftist regime in Angola. Their intervention brought about the victory at Couto Caanavale, and the end of South African involvement in Angola. That Cuban victory gave impetus to the success of the ongoing peace talks between the United States and the Soviet Union, leading to the New York Accord of 1988. This agreement brought about Cuban and South African withdrawal from Angola and South West Africa's independence from South Africa.[49]

Those military interventions in Africa and elsewhere were underwritten with funds that Cuba had received, directly or indirectly, through the aid that it received from the Soviet Union, but the Cuban Revolutionary Government undertook them independently. The celebrated *Operación Carlota* of December

1975 to January 1976, when 1,253 troops and equipment were transported from Cuba to Africa, took the USSR by surprise.[50] General Nikolai Leonov said of Cuba's leadership of the Africa campaign's:

> As regards Angola and Mozambique, we became involved in the events of those African countries against our will. The Cubans were first violins here, and the Russians, playing second fiddle, had to provide material sustenance, but these were not Russian initiatives.[51]

The Cuban Revolutionary Government led by Fidel Castro always maintained independence of action from the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, and in that sense it was never a satellite of the latter.

But the power and strength that the Cuban Revolutionary Government projected by taking an international leadership role was not based on its own strength. From 1962 to 1990 Cuba was in economic terms a client state of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. By 1989, Cuba was receiving from that Eurasian power $4 billion annually in grants, loans, and preferred trade-partner arrangements. This subsidy allowed the Cuban Revolutionary Government to establish model educational and public health systems, to support arts and letters, and to establish competitive sports programs in Cuba—in addition to aiding armed revolts by Marxist groups in Africa, Asia, and Central America. Given the financial aid, there was little concern whether or not Cuba could develop and grew economically, while simultaneously supporting the cost of those international excursions.[52]

The Economic Policies of the Cuban Revolutionary Government

The economic policies of the Cuban Revolutionary Government have varied throughout the years, but have consistently had a political motivation—ranging from Ernesto Guevara's attempt in the 1960s to create a new man inspired by revolutionary spirit and not by individual profit, to political concerns after 1993 about the revival of an entrepreneurial class among the Cuban population. None of the agrarian reform laws issued after the 1959 law gave land to individuals. Confiscated agricultural enterprises became state property under the management of individuals who were chosen on account of their political credentials and not for their knowledge, expertise, or entrepreneurship. The same thing happened with non-agricultural enterprises in Cuba. When they were confiscated, they were not turned into independent worker-owned cooperatives or placed under worker management, but became government enterprises—and although they were called cooperatives, they were managed by government officers.[53] By 1989, the only enterprises in Cuba not operated by the Revolutionary Government were farms 165 acres or smaller in size; and according to the Cuban Constitution of 1976, inheritance rights were not absolute. Ironically, from 1960 to the present, truly worker-owned and worker-managed enterprises have formed and flourished in capitalist countries, not only in the Western European democracies, but also in Spain, under the dictatorial anti-communist government of

Francisco Franco (in Mondragon).[54] The Cuban Revolutionary Government led by Fidel Castro never allowed in Cuba a project where Cuban workers had the degree of empowerment that the Spanish workers owning and operating the Mondragon cooperative had. By 1989 the Revolutionary Government had attained an absolute control over the Cuban economy, because even the few remaining private farms had to sell all their crops at a set price to the government agency called "acopio."

Although the Cuban Revolutionary Government developed a Cuban fishing fleet, and began the exportation of citrus fruits and of canned tropical fruit after 1962, it did not overcome the reliance of the Cuban economy on sugar exports. Actually, the Revolutionary Government implemented policies that reduced Cuba's self-sufficiency in food staples such as rice (by abandoning rice growing) and beef. Cattle raising had been important in Cuba since its beginnings as a domain of the Spanish Crown in the sixteenth century, but mismanagement and ill-advised farming policies had reduced it in 1989 to a shadow of what it had been in pre-revolutionary Cuba.[55] But the dire effects of a command economy based on political objectives were hidden by the glitter of Cuban medical research, Cuban government-sponsored cultural international events, and Cuban military success in Africa.[56]

The Achievements of the Cuban Revolutionary Government

The Revolutionary Government did much for the material welfare of the Cuban people in the 1960s. Although it is true that it expanded public health services from a system that was advanced in world comparative terms, it went beyond anything offered by the Republic of Cuba from 1902 to 1958, building new hospitals and health care centers throughout the island. It developed a universal care system that covered all Cubans from cradle to grave, and funded medical research in immunology. Medical research took place in Cuba before 1959, but in 1982 the Cuban Revolutionary Government took it beyond what existed in the Republic of Cuba when it created the Center for Biological Research. In 1986 it placed Cuban medical research in the cutting edge when it created the Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology.[57]

Another great achievement of the Cuban Revolutionary Government was to put in place a system of universal public education from kindergarten to university education—a system that went beyond what the Republic of Cuba had developed. At the beginning, this system was a rigorous process containing examinations to demonstrate achievement. In addition to examinations to qualify for passing grades in primary education and secondary school (*secundaria básica* and *preuniversitario*) there were examinations at the end of primary education, and at the end of secondary education. Textbooks were provided free of charge, and students who showed academic excellence were usually supported in their academic endeavors. Education at university became free of charge. In 1959, there were four universities in Cuba; two in Havana, one in Cienfuegos and another in Santiago de Cuba. After 1959, attendance at universities by rural students was facilitated by building universities in small cities, and by the

creation of student dormitories (at the beginning, by the conversion of the private homes of exiles) for students from areas too far away from universities to commute.[58]

For a while it seemed that a new Cuban school of architecture was going to develop, when the Cuban Revolutionary Government commissioned Ricardo Porro to design an imaginative building complex to house a National Arts School in Cubanacan, outside of Havana. Porro used natural materials (brick and mortar as well as concrete) in those structures, exposing their textures instead of concealing them under plaster or stone. He also used in those buildings traditional forms such as the "Catalan vault." But the promise in new approaches to materials and to structural forms did not come to fruition, because architectural training at the University of Havana was placed within a framework of centralized planning that emphasized practical concerns and prefabricated structures. Nevertheless, Cuban architects designed fine buildings after 1959, for example the apartment buildings in Havana del Este and the Pan-American village near Cojímar. Several striking structures have been built since the 1980s, when José Antonio Choy designed his postmodern Hotel Santiago.[59]

Before 1959, Cuba had one prestigious academy of drawing, painting, and sculpture at Havana (San Alejandro), and perhaps a dozen music conservatories at Havana, Santiago, and Cienfuegos. After 1959, art schools and musical conservatories were established in small cities all over the island. The performing arts and classical music were made accessible to the Cuban masses by the Revolutionary Government not only through radio and television, but also through the sale of tickets at subsidized rates. The patronage of the Cuban Revolutionary Government has allowed the development of theater companies, ballet companies, lyric theater companies, and symphonic orchestras in small cities. Under the patronage of the Revolutionary Government, the ballet company founded by Alicia Alonso at Havana in the 1950s became the internationally acclaimed Ballet Nacional de Cuba.[60] Although films had been made in Cuba before 1959, an institutionalized Cuban cinema industry came into being only after the creation of the Cuban Institute for Cinematographic Arts and Industries (ICAIC) under the direction of Alfredo Guevara by the Cuban Revolutionary Government. The Cuban National Symphony has become a world-renowned symphonic orchestra with support from the Cuban Revolutionary Government. Guitar virtuoso and composer Leo Brouwer was lionized by the Cuban Revolutionary Government, and he attracted international attention with his technique and his compositions. The cultural institutions mentioned above became internationally known, and gave to Cuba a prestige as a nation with an educated population and intellectual achievers that it did not have before. The Cuban Revolutionary Government has always taken credit for this, and contrasted the prestige of Cuba as an educated society under its aegis with the alleged reputation of Cuba as the brothel of the Caribbean before 1959.

Cuban popular music of the 1950s had blossomed in casinos and social clubs, places that the leadership of the Cuban Revolutionary Government considered to be showcases of the decadence and immorality encouraged by capitalism: the

cosmopolitanism of that music was subversive of the nationalism that the Revolutionary Government promoted.[61] There was a veritable exodus of popular music performers from Cuba between 1960 and 1966.[62] In the 1960s and the 1970s, the Cuban Revolutionary Government promoted a new popular music inspired by the *troveros* of the Cuban countryside and their music (*música guajira*) that had extraterritorial connections, because it had similarities with the *nueva canción* in Chile, the *nova cançó* in Spain, and the "protest song" in the United States. This music was called *Nueva Trova*, and it was produced by outstanding singer composers such as Pablo Milanés and Silvio Rodríguez.[63] The Cuban Revolutionary Government thus attempted to wean away the Cuban population from a popular culture that it considered alien and corrupting. Its support for *Nueva Trova* was nationalistic on account of this musical movement harking back to the music of Cuban *guajiros* (country people).

The music of *Nueva Trova*, however, was not dancing music. Cuban popular music groups like *Los Van Van*, and *Los Irakere* produced dancing music derived from that of the 1940s and 1950s, but more Afro-Cuban and earthier.[64] Although this dancing music was related to commercial Latin American and Caribbean popular music like Puerto Rican *salsa*, its lyrics often had "revolutionary messages." A famous example of this was the moral support that Fidel Castro's doomed drive for Cuban sugar mills to produce a ten-million-ton harvest in 1970 derived from a song by the band that came to be known as *Los Van Van*. In the 1990s, Cuban club music of the 1950s had a revival after the American guitar player Ry Cooder gathered in Havana a group of musicians who had been active in the 1950s, recorded them, and issued in 1997 the compact disc *Buena Vista Social Club*. In 1999, Wim Wenders directed a documentary about that group with the same title.[65]

The Cuban Revolutionary Government became a supporter of sports. Cuban schools promoted student participation in all sports from grammar schools to universities. This intensive government support for athletics brought about Cuban dominance of many sports in international competitions, for example the Pan-American Games and the Olympic Games, where Cuban boxers and long-distance runners have acquired renown. Under the Cuban Revolutionary Government, Cuba changed from a country that had won a handful of Olympic Games medals to one of the top medal-winning nations.[66] Chess was promoted with the creation of the Capablanca Memorial Tournament in 1962.

Dissidents, Political Prisoners and Exiles

The Cuban Revolutionary Government had almost universal support in 1959. But this support began to decline soon thereafter, when it became more autocratic and radical. Some Cubans, at all levels of society, who had criticized the Batista regime because it was despotic and not representative withdrew their support from the Revolutionary Government by the end of 1960, because they saw in it what they had criticized in the Batista regime. Some of them left Cuba, and in the United States they formed associations of exiles where men were recruited for the brigade that would land in Cuba with US government support at

Playa Girón in April 1961. But many stayed in Cuba, some rising up in arms in Central Cuba, in the Escambray Mountain Range.[67] The number of disillusioned supporters and dissidents grew after Fidel Castro declared himself a Marxist-Leninist on December 2, 1961. Between 1960 and 1962, over 14,000 Cuban children left Cuba for the United States, sent by parents fearful of losing their parental rights and of their children becoming indoctrinated. This exodus, coordinated by the archdiocese of Miami, Florida, with assistance from the CIA, became known as "Operation Pedro Pan."[68]

Widespread benefits provided by the Cuban Revolutionary Government reached the majority of the Cuban population—the Cuban poor masses and the working class—and gained it their allegiance and support. By 1961, neighborhood "committees for the defence of the Revolution" had formed in practically every block of Cuban cities and towns, staffed by Cubans who felt loyalty for the Revolutionary Government, and were ready to do anything to prevent its overthrow, including spying on their neighbors. A formal system of surveillance was developed by the Ministry of the Interior, which organized a force of undercover agents. Cubans who did not agree with the changes that were taking place in their country found that even loyal criticism was suspect, and fearful of the intensive surveillance of formal and informal informants, some of them reluctantly chose exile.

Dissidence in Cuba could bring people easily to jail. Laws were passed which criminalized expressing political opinions critical or seemingly critical of the Revolutionary Government. Thus, in 1966 the poet Heberto Padilla was imprisoned on account of the publication of a collection of his poems with the seemingly satirical title *Fuera del juego* (*Sent off the Field*). In 1964 poet Jorge Valls was imprisoned, accused of being a political activist, and in the 1990s the dissident poet María Elena Cruz Varela was imprisoned for the same reason.[69] Perhaps the best-known Cuban political prisoner is Armando Valladares, who was sent to prison in 1960 at age 23, because as an employee of the Ministry of Communication he refused to put on his office desk an "I'm with Fidel" sign. For this small act of defiance he was given 30 years in prison. His case became internationally known, and he was released in 1982. After his release he published his prison memoirs, *Against All Hope*.[70] Human rights have been violated by the Cuban Revolutionary Government from its inception, particularly in its treatment of political prisoners. In 1999, human rights in Cuba had the dubious honor of being the subject of a commemoratory anniversary report by the nongovernmental agency Human Rights Watch titled *Cuba's Repressive Machinery. Human Rights Forty Years after the Revolution*.[71]

The number and kind of human rights violations in Cuba during the period covered in this chapter diminished toward its end. That was particularly the case with religious rights violations. But some types of violations of human rights in Cuba have remained unabated, because they are enshrined in the constitution of this socialist republic. That is the case with violations of personal liberty, and with some security measures.[72] Freedom of expression is an essential freedom on which other freedoms depend, and the Cuban Constitution prescribes a state monopoly over means of communication.[73] The Universal Declaration of Human

Rights states in its Article 12.2 that every person has the right to leave and re-enter any country; however, that right is not respected in Cuba, where its restriction is still systemic.[74]

In 1960, the Cuban Revolutionary Government began to restrict the exit of Cubans wanting to leave Cuba in order to control the exodus of professionals and technicians. It did this by requiring from Cubans wishing to leave the country to complete an application for departure (permiso de salida). But twice it has turned unexpected massive exits of disaffected Cubans into forced departures of Cubans that it considered undesirables: in 1965 and in 1980. In 1965, it happened after Fidel Castro said in public that the Revolutionary Government would allow any Cuban who wanted to leave Cuba to do so, and, in response to his statement, American President Lyndon Baines Johnson declared publicly that the United States would welcome any Cuban who had a sponsor in this country. In the fall of 1965, hundreds of Cubans in the United States (the sponsors) who went to the northern Cuban port of Camarioca to pick up relatives, could not prevent the boats and yatchs that they had hired to carry relatives out of the island from being commandeered by Cuban militia, who led into them drug addicts, prostitutes, homosexuals, inmates from institutions for the mentally ill, common criminals, and other categories considered undesirables by the Cuban Revolutionary Government.[75]

In 1980, the forcing of undesirables onto the boats of Cubans from the United States who had sailed to Cuba to bring out relatives or friends began after a disagreement between the Cuban Revolutionary Government and the Peruvian ambassador in Cuba. This disagreement caused US President Jimmy Carter to declare that the United States would welcome Cubans who had entered the Peruvian embassy at Havana looking for political asylum. Again, Cubans in the United States rented yachts and boats to go to Cuba (this time to the northern Cuban port of El Mariel) to pick up relatives who had entered the Peruvian embassy at Havana; once there, they had to allow officers of the Cuban Revolutionary Government to load their crafts with drug addicts, prostitutes, homosexuals, inmates from institutions for the mentally ill, and common criminals, many of whom were not leaving Cuba willingly.[76]

Another exodus of Cubans, this time composed completely of voluntary migrants, began in 1993. Following food riots in Havana that year, the Cuban Revolutionary Government allowed all Cubans who wanted to leave the island in rafts to do so. In the course of a few months, thousands of Cubans crossed the Straits of Florida in flimsy vessels, and after thousands perished in the course of their journey, the administration of President Bill Clinton asked the Cuban Revolutionary Government to reinstate its emigration restrictions.[77] The Cuban Revolutionary Government must have felt gratified by this: after years of being criticized by the United States for not allowing free emigration, the United States requested that the restrictive policy be reinstated. This exodus has been documented by Dr. Holly Ackerman in her website *Balseros* (http://balseros.unc.edu).

Cubans unhappy with the Cuban Revolutionary Government who have been able to leave Cuba have done so through many venues and countries, but most

have left for the United States. Cuban exiles in the United States have participated in various efforts to destabilize the Cuban Revolutionary Government undertaken by the US government from third countries. The brigade of Cuban exiles who landed in Playa Giron in 1961 is only the best-known of those efforts. Cubans in the United States have exercised an influence over the foreign policy of this country far beyond that warranted by their numbers. The waves of undesired immigrants from Cuba of 1965 and 1980 mentioned above were triggered by the large number of Cuban exiles taking direct and swift action to bring relatives and friends out of Cuba in rented vessels or in their own, whose actions were subverted by the Cuban Revolutionary Government into measures of its own that embarrassed both the Cuban exiles and the US government.

After US President Jimmy Carter took office in 1977, he decided to seek normalization of relations with Cuba. In September of that year, US officials replaced the Swiss in the US Interest Section in Havana, located in the former US Embassy. But this rapprochement did not last, because the Carter administration was affronted by Cuban military involvement in Angola. It can be argued, however, that the US government did not change its foreign policy towards Cuba during the period covered by this chapter because of the political influence of Cuban exiles, many of whom became permanent residents or naturalized citizens of the United States, and among whom a large number have become economically successful. Since 1980, Cuban-Americans associated first with the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF), and after 2000 the Cuban American United States Congressional Delegation (CA-USCD), prevented the normalization of those relations. Because of the codification in 1996 through the so-called Helms-Burton Bill of the embargo on trade and travel between Cuba and the United States established by presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy in the 1960s, any attempt to change them substantially must be approved by the US Congress.[78]

From its creation in 1977 until the re-establishment of United States–Cuba relations in July 2015, the US Interest Section at Havana acted mainly as a processor of exit visas for Cubans emigrating to the United States, except during the years when James Cason was Interest Section Chief. From 2002 to 2005, the Honorable Mr. Cason expressed loudly his support for opponents of the Revolutionary Government, meeting Cuban dissidents and independent journalists regularly.[79] His statements and demeanor emulated those of General Fitzhugh Lee at Havana between 1896 and 1898. In April 2003, he criticized justly the summary execution by the Revolutionary Government of three hijackers of a Cuban ferry, and the arrest of 75 independent journalists and pro-democracy activists. But the tone of his pronouncements, purported to bring about democracy to Cuba, struck observers as intended to bring about unrest.[80]

Throughout the period covered by this chapter, the United States claimed not to recognize the Cuban Revolutionary Government as a legitimate government because it was undemocratic. It justified its punitive actions against Cuba as attempts to bring democracy to the island. For many years Cuban exiles in the United States and Cuban-Americans supported, and demanded, that policy. In 1996, Manuel Pastor Jr. remarked in an article about the future of Cuba after the

dissolution of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics that he suspected they desired the economic collapse and disintegration of the Cuban Revolutionary Government in order to pick up the reins of power in the island and rule a new economy and society there from their business offices in Florida.[81] It could be argued, however, that the animosity of the US government toward the Cuban government in those years retarded any possible effort by Cubans to begin negotiating among themselves the many issues that divide them, and encouraged Cubans in the United States to be intransigent.[82] The Cuban government is justified in being wary about the US government, whose stated aim is to undermine it. But it is opportunistic when it refuses to allow freedom of expression lest loyal criticism in Cuba may provide comfort to a foreign agressor.

The most shocking incidence of alleged dissidence against the Cuban Revolutionary Government in this period, however, had nothing to do with Cuban exiles or with the United States. On June 12, 1989, the Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces announced the arrest of General Arnaldo Ochoa (1930–1989), a hero of the African wars, accused of corruption during those campaigns. The charges included the sale of diamonds and ivory from Angola, and treason. As the investigation continued, leads were found to other military and Ministry of the Interior officials, including the brothers Patricio and Antonio de la Guardia, who were accused of drug trafficking. General Ochoa and the de la Guardia brothers were found guilty, and Ochoa and Antonio de la Guardia were condemned to death. Although they professed loyalty to the Cuban Revolutionary Government and to Fidel Castro in exculpatory declarations during their trials, rumors have persisted about their planning a coup d'état to overthrow the Castro brothers, as well as about the latter being aware and acquiescing to their drug-smuggling activities, supported by statements made by General Rafael del Pino, a Cuban Air Force officer who had defected in 1987.[83]

The Collapse of the USSR, and the Return of a Market Economy to Cuba: 1990–2008

The collapse of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics in 1991 (and the concomitant cessation of the subsidies that allowed Cuba to shine among Third World Countries) showed that the achievements of the Cuban Revolutionary Government in education, public health, and international assistance had been possible largely because of the largesse of its Eurasian protector.[84] In 1992, the Cuban Revolutionary Government declared an "emergency period" (*período especial*) that has not been lifted yet, allowing for drastic austerity measures in the allocation of public funds. Given the complete control of Cuban society by the Revolutionary Government, this meant that practically every aspect of daily life was changed for almost all the residents of the island.[85]

After food riots at Havana in 1993, the Cuban Revolutionary Government led by Fidel Castro allowed the remaining private farmers to sell in open markets (at prices set by themselves) whatever they produced above a certain quota that they had to sell at set prices to "acopio." This liberalization measure was meant to encourage these farmers to produce more—some Revolutionary Government

leaders, like Raúl Castro, remembered the high productivity of Cuban small farmers before they were forced to sell all of their produce to the government at a low price, sometimes below the cost of production—and it worked. At the same time, the clause in the Cuban Constitution of 1976 regarding leaving or receiving land in inheritance was modified. Also in 1993, the Cuban Revolutionary Government allowed Cubans to sell their services (after paying for a government-issued work permit), and to own US dollars (a heavily penalized crime thereto). The latter measure allowed Cubans with relatives or friends in the United States to receive financial assistance from abroad.[86]

The Long Survival

At the beginning of the "emergency period" in 1991, Cuba observers predicted that the Cuban Revolutionary Government would end like the Communist regimes of Eastern Europe in 1989. Cuba observers in the United States (especially among the large Cuban exile community in this country) predicted that the Cuban economy would collapse due to the combined circumstances of the American embargo and the cessation of Soviet subsidies. It was at this juncture that Andrés Oppenheimer, a reporter for *The Miami Herald*, wrote a book titled *Castro's Final Hour: The Secret Story behind the Coming Downfall of Communist Cuba*.[87] However, the Cuban Revolutionary Government was able to survive the crisis of the early 1990s because it was willing to compromise, and to make business deals with European and Latin American corporations.

These negotiations crossed a wide range of industries, including tourism, biotechnological research, mining, and agriculture. The Cuban Revolutionary Government also compromised its ideal of guaranteed full-employment, closing many inefficient or obsolete enterprises, including hundreds of sugar mills. As a result of those drastic measures, sugar is no longer the main Cuban industry, and the early dream of the Cuban Revolutionary Government of ending Cuba's dependence on sugar has become reality—ironically, forced on it by international market and political forces rather than by government planning.

The law allowing Cubans to own foreign currency has encouraged Cubans in the United States with relatives in the island to send remittances to them. In another ironic turn of events, these Cuban-Americans have helped with their periodic infusions of dollars the very economy that they have heretofore wanted to collapse by embargo.[88] In 2003, the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean reported that one of Cuba's largest sources of foreign exchange was Cubans who live abroad.[89] The Cuban Revolutionary Government has been able to pay most of its foreign debt installments, and to keep its social welfare system viable because of its ability to obtain foreign exchange.

In addition to the remittances of Cubans in the United States to friends and relatives, the Cuban Revolutionary Government has received foreign exchange through the sale of services by Cuban citizens abroad. Already in the 1980s, Cuba sent contract workers abroad. These were both skilled and

unskilled workers who went to East European socialist republics, whose governments paid their salary in foreign exchange to the Cuban government; the workers, in turn, were reimbursed by the Cuban government in Cuban pesos.[90] Today, Cuba sends out professionals, such as physicians, teachers, and artists to Latin American and African countries under similar terms that make these Cubans a source of foreign exchange to the Cuban Revolutionary Government. In 1990, the Cuban Revolutionary Government survived the most important crisis of its existence, because of the foreign loans and investment in joint ventures that it received from European and Latin American countries, and the assistance of supporters abroad; but it has been able to thrive after 1999 thanks to the generous direct and indirect financial aid of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.[91]

Partly in order to mollify accusations (by foreign observers from countries or institutions whose financial assistance or support it was courting) of censorship and of disregard for human rights, the Cuban Revolutionary Government lessened repression in the years following the demise of the USSR. The most spectacular change in that respect was the lessening of restrictions on churches and religious groups. In 1998, Fidel Castro invited John Paul II, Supreme Pontiff of the Catholic Church, to visit Cuba, and agreed to his request that the Cuban Revolutionary Government allow the public celebration of Christmas. During Pope John Paul II's visit, the statue of the Virgin Mary at the national shrine to Our Lady of Charity at El Cobre traveled to Santiago de Cuba, where she was crowned by him as patroness of Cuba. Other ceremonies of a politically symbolic nature like this were allowed by the Cuban Revolutionary Government during John Paul II's visit, and some hoped that it was going to shed its Marxist ideology. But these hopes were never realized, and after that papal visit, changes in Cuba did not extend to a liberalization of political life.[92]

Also in the 1990s, the Revolutionary Government was faced with a new kind of dissident, who wanted to change things through the legal means allowed by the Cuban Constitution of 1976 and the law. They were educated and aware of international events, including the collapse of the European socialist republics and of the Soviet Union. Economic specialists among them published a document critical of the economic policies of the Revolutionary Goverenment, *La Patria es de todos* (*The Fatherland for All*).[93] Another group emerged which took the name Varela Project. This group proposed a petition for a referendum regarding reform of Cuba's one party system. Under the terms of the Constitution of 1976, citizens were permitted to propose new legistation provided they could gather at lest 10,000 voters to support their proposal. In May 2002, Osvaldo Payá, the Varela Project leader, delivered a petition signed by 11,000 people to the National Assembly. The reaction of the Revolutionary Government to this civic effort was to organize a referendum designed to endorse the inalterably "socialist character" of the Cuban Constitution as it was at that time, which was duly approved by the National Assembly.[94]

In the economic sphere, the inefficiencies of the command economy persisted in Cuba. Most of the economic reforms of the early 1990s (limited and overtaxed

farmers' markets, and permits for self-employment, to serve food, and to rent rooms to tourists in one's home) were inadequate to make the Cuban economy the thriving economy that it was in the middle of the nineteenth century (when it was a domain of the Spanish Crown) or later, in the middle of the twentieth century (when it was a de facto protectorate of the United States). But they were good enough for the Cuban Revolutionary Government to survive, and to claim victory over its enemies.

In 2006, Fidel Castro became gravely ill, and he resigned his office temporarily to his brother Raúl. During the first months of Raúl's temporary administration, there were rumors about economic changes to address realistically the challenges facing the Cuban economy since it lost the $4 billion annual subsidy that it used to receive from the Soviet Union. Rumors of economic changes ceased at once when Fidel Castro let it be known from his sick bed that capitalism would never return to Cuba. But they sprang up again after Fidel resigned permanently, and Raúl was elected President in February 2008.

Notes

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22 Carlos Franqui, *Family Portrait with Fidel*, 7–8.
23 Ibid., 17–18.
24 Thomas, *Cuba*, 1372–1373.
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26 Ibid., 75–76.
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Figure 5.1 Street Scene in Havana.
Source: Photograph by Andrea Brizzi.

5 Cuba under Raúl Castro

Under the Shadow of the Big Brother

The temporary resignation from office in 2006 of President Fidel Castro, the undisputable leader of the Cuban Revolutionary Government since 1959, seemed to inaugurate a more collegial administration in Cuba under his brother Raúl. This impression was encouraged by Raúl himself when, after his election as President of Cuba in February 2008, he declared that he was willing to listen to all. Raúl is a discreet man, though, and all that he said at that time about his vision for the future was vague and non-committal.[1]

After Raúl Castro became President in February 2008, he spoke in favor of greater openness towards constructive criticism of government policies; but only one month later, a student who publicly questioned one of his cabinet Ministers at Havana University about the lack of freedom to travel in Cuba was summoned to Interior Ministry headquarters, and convinced to make a public statement to the effect that he had not meant to criticize the Cuban Revolutionary Government. In July 2008, Raúl Castro offered to allow Cuban independent farmers the use (without ownership) of public lands to expand their crops. At that time, 50 percent of Cuba's arable land—75 percent of it owned by the Cuban Revolutionary Government—was lying fallow, and it was speculated that his administration was going to bring about a China-like mixed economy.

Since the early 2000s, Cuban writers and artists of renown had been allowed to travel abroad (and even to stay abroad) for indefinite periods of time, but only after asking for government permission to do so. In 2012, Raúl Castro signed a law allowing Cubans to travel abroad without need of a government permit. After 2003, the wives of political prisoners have been allowed to demonstrate silently every week in a Havana neighborhood (although they are often harassed).[2] Now there is a small dissident movement, and a credible human rights organization in Cuba that is allowed to communicate with human rights groups outside Cuba. All of this seems very little, but compared to how things used to be 50 years ago, these small changes represent a momentous turn-about.[3] For example, it is undeniable that being a practicing Catholic in Cuba today is easier than it was in 1966. The expulsion of foreign priests in 1961 was followed by a period when parishes had no pastors, because foreign priests were not allowed to enter Cuba, but now permission is granted to foreign priests and members of

religious orders to staff parish churches. Afro-Cuban religious leaders are no longer harassed by the Revolutionary Government.[4]

Perhaps the most remarkable change since Raúl became President is that the United States of America is no longer blamed as the scapegoat for everything going wrong in the Socialist Republic of Cuba. This caused some to hope that if the United States met Cuba half-way, relations between the two neighbors could normalize. This seems to have been the point of view of US President Barak Obama in February 2009, when he said before press representatives that he was willing to discuss all issues that prevented the restoration of diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba with President Raúl Castro if Castro was willing to do the same. Raúl Castro replied to President Obama's public statement saying that he was willing to do likewise. But after Raúl released this statement, his brother wrote in his regular column in *Granma* (the newspaper of the Cuban Revolutionary Government) that Raúl had been misunderstood, and that Raúl was not willing to discuss all issues with the United States. This statement by the ailing Fidel Castro, writing from his sick room, made many Cuba observers suspect that he was unwilling to let his brother do anything of which he did not approve, and that the normalization of relations between Cuba and the United States did not meet his approval. After that incident, Cuba revived its neglected diplomatic relations with Russia, and developed economic relations with China.[5] But on December 17, 2014, US President Barak Obama announced that he was easing restrictions on Cuban travel and trade for US citizens and corporations. In the same public announcement he declared that the United States and Cuba were starting discussions to normalize diplomatic relations, and President Raúl Castro was willing to reciprocate.[6]

Achievements and Shortcomings of the Cuban Revolutionary Government

Although the Cuban Revolutionary Government did much for the material welfare of the Cuban people in the 1960s (expanding public health services beyond anything offered by the Republic of Cuba, granting deeds of conditional home ownership to renters of urban dwellings after they paid rent for a fixed number of years, and selling food and clothing at subsidized prices at stores under a rationing card system), the Cuban people paid a heavy price for all those benefits. Cubans under Fidel Castro benefitted from guaranteed material benefits, but forfeited private freedoms (such as freedom of movement and of speech), and suffered the surveillance of committees for the defense of the revolution on every city block (having family members assigned to spy on their relatives).[7] They also worked for those benefits doing expected "voluntary" work after school (for students), and on Sunday (Cuba has a six-work-day week) for professionals and workers. Under the Cuban Revolutionary Government athletism was encouraged and supported in schools. This policy had as a result a healthier population in Cuba, and widespread participation of Cuban youths in sports. But one could argue that it was politically motivated, because it promoted a sense of national unity and pride in Cuba,

and raised the prestige of the Cuban Revolutionary Government abroad when Cuban teams began to perform outstandingly at international sport competitions.[8] Racism and racial discrimination were declared ended in Cuba by Fidel Castro in his Second Havana Declaration in 1962, but afterwards any complaint about racist behavior was ignored or criticized as slanderous to the Revolutionary Government, and giving comfort to its enemies. As a result, racist prejudices and behavior have persisted in Cuba despite the official position of the Cuban Revolutionary Government that the problem of racial discrimination and racism has been solved.[9]

The Cuban public school system was not bad when the Revolutionary Government took control of Cuba in 1959. But the advances since then are clear: it is undeniable that the Cuban Revolutionary Government eliminated adult illiteracy in Cuba in 1961; that it built many new schools, especially in neglected rural areas; and that it made the fine arts and classical music accessible to the Cuban masses.[10] But until recently in Cuba it was not always possible for someone to read what they wanted, not only because many books were unavailable in stores, but because libraries owning them would not display them publicly; those who read them without permission were suspected of disloyalty to the Cuban Revolutionary Government. Cuban novelist Reinaldo Arenas wrote in his memoirs *Before Night Falls* about book censorship in the National Library in Havana, where books by authors like Max Weber and Leo Strauss were kept in a section only accessible to readers with a specific permit.[11]

Noble efforts by the Cuban Revolutionary Government to bring the Cuban National Symphony to national audiences by televising its performances, and to popularize opera by promoting the singing of opera in Spanish, often became propaganda instruments through politicized concert programs and program notes. The support given to writers and artists has allowed many Cuban authors and artists to thrive, and to experiment without fear of material want; but they have to respect limits set by Fidel Castro himself during a public address to an assembly of Cuban artists and writers in 1961, when he said that there was not censorship in Cuba, but that "Within the Revolution everything; against the Revolution nothing."[12] This dictum has been interpreted in various ways, depending upon individual circumstances. The very looseness of the bounds that it set lended itself to arbitrariness, as it is shown by the trial of poet Heberto Padilla in 1966, by the refusal to allow the performance of Antón Arrufat's play "Los siete contra Tebas" in 1968, and by the retirement from bookstore and library shelves for many years of works by prestigious Cuban authors such as Heberto Padilla, Guillermo Cabrera Infante, and Reinaldo Arenas after they defected.[13]

Since the 1980s, there have been no restrictions on painters and sculptors concerning their subject matter and style. But in the 1960s, abstract painting was discouraged by not providing abstract painters with rationed art supplies. Artists producing realistic paintings glorifying peasants and workers, and graphic art popularizing the images of revolutionary heroes were encouraged by supplying them with the scarce canvas and pigments. Beneficiaries of this artistic policy were artists like Servando Carrera Moreno, who painted sugar cane

cutters and workers as heroes, and Raúl Martínez, who made "pop art" of national heroes such as José Martí and "Che" Guevara. The Cuban Revolutionary Government provides for artists who know how to "take part in the game." For many years it lionized the late Colombian author and Nobel Laureate Gabriel García Márquez, who throughout his life refused to join fellow writers in criticizing violations of the right to free expression in Cuba under the Cuban Revolutionary Government.

Digital media is an area where the Cuban Revolutionary Government can claim success, and also one in which those who think that access to the internet should be available without restriction can consider its restrictions to internet access in Cuba a shortcoming. Cristina Venegas has analyzed that incongruent legacy in *Digital Dilemmas*, a book that looks at issues as diverse as the creativity of the Cuban Revolutionary Government in inventing, recycling and deploying digital technologies, to its prohibition of home satellite dishes in Cuba.[14] Reforms to information policy since 2009 have led to greater internet "accessibility" in Cuba. Last but not least, until 1959 Cuba's independence was mediated by its economic dependence on the guaranteed purchase of a quota of Cuban cane sugar production by the United States, and the inordinate influence of the ambassador of the United States on the President of Cuba. That dependence was ended by the Cuban Revolutionary Government. But, due to the destruction of Cuba's once prosperous economy by the centralist and incompetent policies of the Cuban Revolutionary Government, Cuba is now self-sufficient in a fewer number of agricultural and animal products than it was in 1959. Furthermore, as Maurice Halperin has shown, although today Cuba is politically free and sovereign, the lack of freedom of expression for Cubans under the Revolutionary Government is an undeniable fact.[15]

The Cuban Revolutionary Government and its Global Revolutionary Mission

Given past experience, it is doubtful that United States–Cuba relations will improve beyond re-establishing diplomatic relations and ending long-standing travel restrictions on US citizens wanting to travel to Cuba. Among the reasons: the Cuban Revolutionary Government since its inception has been defiantly independent and actively supportive of revolutionary movements globally; the international reputation of the Cuban Revolutionary Government is due in great extent to its challenging the United States successfully; and the reluctance to befriend the United States by Cubans in the armed forces, the Cuban Communist Party, and the hundreds of national grassroots organizations created by the Cuban Revolutionary Government in the last 55 years as defenders of the fatherland against an evil US imperialistic aggressor. It is unlikely that Fidel Castro or his brother Raúl have read Robert Frost's poem "No Holy Wars for Them," a poem that includes the verses: "Nations like the Cuban and the Swiss/ Can never hope to wage a Global Mission./ No Holy Wars for them. The most the small/ Can ever give us is a nuisance brawl."[16] But whether they have read that poem or not, I am sure that they will continue doing their best to prove those verses

wrong, by promoting Cuban influence abroad, as a model of an alternative to capitalism, and as a successful challenger of US influence in the Americas (defined as imperialism).

Good United States–Cuba relations require not only the willingness of the United States to allow Cuba and the Cubans to chart their own independent path, but also Cuba's willingness to stop encouraging antagonism towards the United States in Latin America and the Caribbean, and cultivating relations with states that present themselves as antagonistic to the United States, like North Korea and Russia. Incidents like the concealed Cuban shipment in a North Korean ship going through the Panama Canal of two MiG 21 jet fighters, ammunition, and 15 apparently new MiG engines, reported in *The Economist* on December 15, 2013 are bound to make Americans doubt the peaceful intentions of the Cuban Revolutionary Government. Raúl Castro's friend, General Nikolai Leonov, was Deputy Chief Director of the State Security Committee (KGB) of the Soviet Union, and a mentor of Vladimir Putin's when the latter was an officer in that institution. Since the rise of Putin in 2000, Russian involvement in Cuba has increased, and recent rumors of Russian financing of the upgrade of the Northern Cuba harbor of El Mariel are not conducive to fostering a desire for amity with Cuba in the United States. The defiant attitude of the Cuban Revolutionary Government is not likely to change, because it cannot afford to give up its mission to support revolutionary struggle and people republics globally, and to undermine the hegemony of the United States in the Americas, without losing its relevance in world affairs, from which it derives both prestige and foreign financial support from powers that see Cuba as an enemy of their enemy.

European countries that once headed empires, like the Netherlands and Austria, are today content with their present position as prosperous small nations. In Latin America, Chile, Costa Rica, and Uruguay are prosperous little countries. But it is doubtful that the present leadership of the Cuban Revolutionary Government is willing to trade the leadership of the anti-imperialist cause in the Americas for the prosperity and tranquility that could follow developing friendly relations with the government of the United States. The day it does so, Cuba will cease being the metaphorical "Mouse that Roared." If the Cuban Revolutionary Government makes peace with the United States, Cuba will no longer be able to claim for itself the role of heroic little challenger of a world power—like the boy David against the giant Goliath. Cuba has played that role for the last 55 years, and in doing so, it has captured the world's attention, and obtained the support of the rivals, enemies, and self-perceived victims of its powerful northern neighbor. However, this assessment may prove to be wrong—like all those books about the final hour of Fidel Castro—if the Cuban Revolutionary Government recognizes that its long-standing policies are inimical to its survival. Despite its ideological justifications, and the image of revolutionary fervor that it has always projected, the Cuban Revolutionary Government has been willing to change course in the past, whenever it seemed necessary for its self-preservation. It will do so again in the future, to the extent that change is necessary for that purpose.

Cuba in 2014

On July 25, 2012, Cuban dissident leader Oswaldo Payá died in a car crash outside of the eastern Cuba city of Bayamo: it was described as having been caused by a car pushing off the road the car where he was traveling. On December 3, 2012, dissident blogger Yoani Sánchez posted an essay (www.lageneraciony.com/mis-preocupaciones) where she listed as her "preocupaciones" (worries) the many young Cuban women who sold their bodies to foreign visitors, the increase of homelessness in Havana, and the persistence of racism in Cuba. Although no movement to overthrow the Cuban Revolutionary Government has ever been detected in Cuba after the April 1961 attempt by exiles at Playa Girón, for several years visitors to the island have detected a pervasive disengagement in the population; a widespread desire to be elsewhere. This perception was captured in 2007 by Florian Borchmeyer and Matthias Hentschler in their documentary "Havana: The New Art of Making Ruins."[17] In the year 2014 dissidents continued to be harassed, and visitors to the island observed the same happenings that worried Ms. Sánchez in 2012. Critics of the decision of US President Barak Obama in December 2014 to re-establish relations to Cuba mentioned the continued record of violations of human rights in Cuba as one of the reasons for opposing that decision.[18] The fact that there were still a considerable number of political prisoners in Cuba was a troubling issue.

In 1959. Fidel Castro obtained almost universal support in Cuba because he gave a vision of Cuba that could be embraced by most Cubans, even when it represented sacrifices for some. He said on February 16, 1959, "In a few years, our standard of living will be above that of Russia." What we know now about the relatively high standard of living in Cuba in the 1950s when compared to other nations of its size, and the depressed access to food and consumer goods of the ordinary citizen in Soviet Russia in 1959, suggests that this goal was achievable. Desire for a Cuba not under the tutelage of the United States was a major reason for the support given to Fidel Castro and the Revolutionary Government in 1959. Although a majority of the Cuban population in 1959 did not hold animosity towards the United States and was taught at school that the United States had liberated Cuba from Spain, educated Cubans had read or heard of the imposition of the Platt Amendement to the Cuban Constitutional Assembly in 1900 by the government of the United States, and were aware of the subordinate place that the Republic of Cuba was expected to keep in international institutions led by its powerful northern neighbor. Duvon C. Corbitt has written about how after 1927 Cuban revisionist historians recapitulated just Cuban grievances against the United States that prepared the ground in which anti-United States feeling was built by the Cuban Revolutionary Government after 1959.[19]

Regardless of the impact on the Cuban economy by Cubans in the United States who send money and goods to their relatives in the island, the Cuban Revolutionary Government has attained its goal of freeing Cuba of the tutelage of the United States. But the standard of living of ordinary Cubans (with the exception of education and public health) was no better in Cuba in 2014 than it was in 1959. It may be argued that in comparative terms it is worse, and the Cuban

Revolutionary Government under President Raúl Castro seems to be focusing on working towards raising it by fostering economic growth. With that purpose, in April 2010 the 6th Congress of the Cuban Communist Party took decisions that marked a distinctive turn in the history of Cuban Communism.[20] Since 2012, Raúl Castro has been taking slow but progressive steps towards economic reform geared to economic growth in Cuba. On March 24, 2012 the magazine *The Economist* published a "Special Report of Cuba" where reference was made to significant changes taking place in the Cuban economy.[21]

In 2014, Cuban economist Carmelo Mesa-Lago denounced Raúl Castro's reforms as insufficient, but those reforms account to a repudiation of almost half a century of institutions and policies inspired by the countries of the Soviet block, as well as of the arbitrary policy turns and experimentation of Fidel Castro.[22] The simultaneous declarations made on December 17 of that year by Presidente Raúl Castro and US President Barak Obama, stating that they were working for the restoration of diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba was another step taken by the younger Castro brother that suggested that he is not like his brother. Cuban political scientist Jorge I. Domínguez said about those declarations that they might be signs of a possible new path for Cuba, although he cautioned that such path did not necessarily lead to political freedom, because it might be directed to a sustainable and prosperous socialist system, but also to an authoritarian regime with a market economy.[23]

Cuba between the Declarations of US President Barack Obama in December 2014 and His Visit to Havana on March 20, 2016

In the middle of the second decade of the twenty-first century, the Cuban Revolutionary Government is the arbiter of the destiny of Cuba and of millions of Cubans living on the island. Despite the institutionalization process begun in 1976, this government is still autocratic, and what President Raúl Castro and his brother Fidel say is extremely important for Cuba and the Cubans. The seeming openness of President Raúl Castro to the overtures made by US President Barack Obama on December 17, 2014 was greeted with approval by many Cubans in Cuba. Photographs published in the international news showed US flags draping windows and balconies in apartment buildings in Havana. The announced negotiations for the reopening of diplomatic relations were interpreted by some as an opportunity for freedom of expression in Cuba.

Performance artist Tania Bruguera was one of those people, and shortly after President Obama's announcement she called on Cubans from all walks of life to meet at Havana's Revolution Square on Tuesday, December 30, 2014, where they would take turns at a microphone to outline their vision for the new era in Cuba. Ms. Bruguera had participated in the demonstrations in New York City's Wall Street sector called "Occupy Wall Street," and she assumed that if public demonstrations against capitalism were tolerated at the heart of global capitalism, then public demonstrations should be acceptable in the capital of Revolutionary Cuba. On December 30 of that year, the *New York Times* reported that the Cuban Revolutionary Government had allowed Ms. Bruguera to travel to

Havana, but that it had barred her from entering Revolution Square. Cuba's National Arts Council issued a public statement to the effect that it had been made clear to Ms. Bruguera that her plan was "unacceptable," because of its location and of its "wide media coverage" in outlets that criticize the Cuban Revolutionary Government. On the day appointed by Ms. Bruguera for the meeting at Revolution Square, Cuban state security personnel arrested journalist Reinaldo Escobar, and Eliécer Avila, leader of the political movement "Somos +," among other Cubans known to disagree with Cuban government policies. Ms. Bruguera and her failed attempt to have a performance at Havana's Revolution Square were still in the news in October of 2015, when Hermione Hoby wrote about her in the *Guardian*.[24]

In December 2014, former Chief of the US Interest Section in Cuba Wayne S. Smith expressed his view that the United States was finally on the right road after so many years.[25] Polls taken among Cuban exiles in South Florida showed that many supported the opening of relations between Cuba and the United States announced by presidents Obama and Castro.[26] But in 2015 there were many critics of President Obama's initiative in the United States, including vocal members of the Cuban exile community Carlos Alberto Montaner and José Azel. Mr. Montaner criticized what he called the errors of President Obama's Cuba policy with theological zeal in an article published in *El Nuevo Herald* on January 18, 2015.[27] Mr. Azel, another vocal Cuban exile, had harsher criticism for the US President, calling his overtures to Cuba "selling out democracy in Cuba."[28]

On December 17, 2014 there seemed to be an accord between US President Obama and Cuba's President Raúl Castro to restore diplomatic relations between the two countries first, and negotiating later complex and intractable issues, such as freedom of expression in Cuba, and the lifting of the economic embargo on Cuba by the United States. The good will of President Raúl Castro was assumed when he freed 53 Cuban political prisoners and exchanged an American spy who had been imprisoned in Cuba for many years, and another American in Cuba, accused of subversive activities earlier in 2014, for three Cubans being held in prison in the United States after being convicted and tried for espionage. In the last week of January 2015 the highest-ranking US delegation in more than three decades, headed by Roberta Jacobson, visited Cuba to negotiate the reopening of US and Cuban embassies in Havana and in Washington. The US delegation met with a Cuban delegation headed by Josefina Vidal, and they set up an agenda for the broader normalization of relations between the two nation states.[29]

A US demand was the lifting of Cuban restrictions on its diplomats traveling outside of Havana, because US diplomats say that these restrictions prevent them from talking to ordinary Cubans and severely curtail their mission. This request was addressed by the head of the Cuban delegation by saying that Cuba was willing to consider granting the right of free diplomatic travel if the United States reduced support for dissidents in Cuba. This exchange was the beginning of a series of demands and counter-demands that by the beginning of March 2015 had stalled the possibility of an ambassadors exchange taking place before the Summit of the Americas, a meeting of Organization of American States country members heads of state taking place in Panama on April 10, 2015.[30]

What seems a reasonable request for freedom of movement by diplomats made by the US delegation was interpreted as a demand for an opening to contact dissidents (by definition seekers of regime change) by the Cuban delegation. The suspicions of the Cuban delegation were confirmed when President Obama's administration made a public statement to the effect that while it is loosening its trade embargo on Cuba and trying to build more diplomatic and economic ties with the Cuban Revolutionary Government, the goal of its Cuba policy is to create more freedoms for ordinary people in the island. Although from the point of view of most people living under a representative political regime President Obama's stated goals are laudable, it is understandable that the delegation of a government that restrains the freedom of expression of its people, like the Cuban Revolutionary Government, will not share that point of view. Josefina Vidal stated the Cuban position on the matter tersely to her US counterparts at their first meeting on January 22, 2015 saying, "We have a different concept of human rights."[31]

In the United States some corporations considered doing business with Cuba once the embargo was lifted. In February 2015, US Senator Amy Klobuchar introduced the "Freedom to Export to Cuba Act of 2015." If passed, it would repeal or amend the laws that have restricted trade between the United States and Cuba for over 50 years. Most US supporters of ending the embargo were interested in Cuban markets for American agricultural and industrial products, but some argued that ending the embargo would also foster trade and cultural ties that would empower Cubans to push for reforms. The latter believe that the end of the embargo could deprive the Cuban Revolutionary Government of a scapegoat.[32] Opposition to lifting the embargo in the United States was strongest among Cuban exile leaders in southern Florida, where US Congress Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtingen criticized President Obama's policy as insensitive to violations of human rights in Cuba.[33] Younger Cuban exiles and Cuban-Americans, however, supported change in the Cuba policy of the United States.[34] Since January 2015, the Cuban Transition Project of the Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies at the University of Miami in Florida has issued many reports by Cuban social scientists in exile, such as Jaime Suchlicki and José Azel, expressing their opposition to the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States while the Castro brothers are alive (http://ctp.iccas.miami.edu). Cuban-American senators in the US Congress Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio expressed their opposition to the re-establishement of diplomatic relations between this nation and Cuba, and vowed to do everything in their power to prevent the end of the Cuban embargo.[35]

Amid the romantic exile rhetoric of the pronouncements issued by the Miami Cuban Transition Project since January 2015 one can perceive a thread which was stated clearly by José Azel in a statement on January 27, 2015 titled "The Other Cuban Succession." In this paper, Mr. Azel warned the Cuban Revolutionary Government about the futility of its attempts to perpetuate itself by promoting younger cadres of the Cuban Communist Party and members of the Castro family, because there is a "Cuban Succession" in the United States ready to recover the political power that their exiled parents lost, naming

explicitly Cuban-Americans in the US Congress, like Senators Cruz and Rubio, and Representatives Alex Mooney and Carlos Curbelo. On January 25, 2016, the Miami Cuban Transition Project published "Cuban Migration: A Nation in Search of a State," an article by Mr. Azel, where he stated that Cuban-Americans had made the United States their *de jure* nation state. A reader of the newspaper articles and public statements made by these Cubans in the United States could easily interpret the transition that they advocated as being the annexation of Cuba by the United States, and one reason for their hostility to President Obama's overture to the Cuban Revolutionary Government being the US President's acknowledging the legitimacy of that government, and the existence of Cuba as an independent and sovereign nation state free to have a government of its own choice.

Not all Cubans in the United States, and certainly not all their Cuban-American offspring, were critical of the changes to the relations between the United States and Cuba brought about by President Obama. But spokesmen of Cubans in the United States, like the Cuban and Cuban-Americans in the US Congress, refused to dialogue with the Cuban Revolutionary Government on the grounds that it was illegitimate and repressive. They ignored or did not consider relevant three important facts: first, that the Cuban Revolutionary Government ended Cuban dependence on the United States, and considers that a source of its legitimacy (not unlike the way that the Chinese Communist government claimed legitimacy as the expeller of foreign imperialists from Chinese soil); second, that at its inception the Cuban Revolutionary Government had widespread support at all levels of Cuban society, and that today, in Cuba, there seems to be no desire to overthrow it in a violent revolutionary style; and third, that the Cuban Revolutionary Government was not imposed on Cuba by a neighboring continental power, like the communist regimes of Eastern European countries. Cuban exile leaders, born in Cuba at a time when Cubans were taught in school that the United States had liberated Cuba from Spain, extolled to Cubans in Cuba the benefits of representative government and the market economy at the same time as they advocated an end to what they call "rule by the Castro Brothers," inadvertently confirming the warnings of the Cuban Revolutionary Government to the Cuban people about their demands for free elections in Cuba being part of a conspiracy to compromise Cuban independence, and that they wanted Cuba to adopt a market economy in order to privatize all Cuban natural resources, and to bring back laissez-faire capitalism.

Little was heard of what Cubans in Cuba (as opposed to Cubans in the United States and Cuban-Americans) had to say about the negotiations between their government and that of the United States. Some individuals, for example blogger Yoani Sánchez, were able to express their opinion directly outside Cuba, but in many cases what was reported as the opinion of Cubans in Cuba was the interpretation of reporters. One group of Cuban dissidents, however, *Unión Patriótica de Cuba* (UNPACU), showed implicit support for President Obama's overtures by its stated opposition to the maintenance of the embargo.[36] One Cuban in Cuba who showed skepticism about those overtures, although not outright opposition, was former Cuban President, Dr. Fidel Castro Ruz. In a letter to the Federation

of University Students released on January 26, 2015 he wrote: "I don't trust the policy of the United States nor have I exchanged any words with them."[37] Several days after the older Castro made those declarations, President Raúl Castro declared at a leadership conference of CELAC (Community of Latin American and Caribbean States) held in Costa Rica that an accord between Cuba and the United States had to meet four criteria: (1) a US return of the Guantanamo naval base; (2) the cessation of American radio and television broadcasts to Cuba (Radio and TV Martí); (3) the end of the trade embargo; and (4) compensation to the Cuban people for the human and economic damage that it has suffered as a result of it. President Raul Castro said, "If these problems are not resolved, this diplomatic rapprochement between Cuba and the United States makes no sense.[38]

However, on July 20, 2015, the Cuban embassy in Washington, D.C. reopened, and on August 14, 2015, US Secretary of State John Kerry became the first American Secretary of State to visit Cuba in 70 years, when he attended the raising of the American flag at the reopening of the US Embassy in Havana. At that event, Mr. Kerry said that the United States would not end its trade embargo until Cuba improved its human rights record. Cuba's foreign minister, Bruno Rodríguez, responded criticizing racial discrimination and police brutality in the United States.[39]

In the second half of 2015 the opening of the world to Cuba continued. In September, Pope Francis visited the island for four days. By that time it was obvious to all important observers that the declarations of December 17, 2014 were to have a lasting effect. Yoani Sánchez said in an interview to the Mexican magazine *Letras Libres*, published in its October issue, that the clocks of many everyday Cubans had been reset by those declarations, and warned Cuban dissident leaders that the thawing of relations between the United States and Cuba had opened for them the opportunity to show political maturity.[40] In the United States, leaders of the Republican Party criticized President Obama's plans to visit Cuba the following year, but on November 11, US congressional representative Tom Emmer, a Republican, spoke at the University of Minnesota's Carlson School of Management in favor of lifting the US trade embargo against Cuba.[41] Early in March 2016, the European Union signed a deal with Cuba normalizing their relations after tensions spawned by disagreement over human rights.[42]

But the Cuban Revolutionary Government did not improve its human rights record after December 17, 2014. Actually, it got worse as far as the right of movement was concerned, because it brought back the requirement to ask permission to leave the country for medical doctors.[43] Thousands of Cubans, fearful that the normalization of relations between the United States and Cuba would bring an end to the special treatment granted to Cubans claiming refugee status by the so-called Cuban Adjustment Act of 1966, left Cuba in 2015 for Latin American countries in order to attain entry to the United States through the Mexican border.[44] Before President Obama left for Cuba, he wrote a letter to the Cuban human rights group known as *Las Damas de Blanco*, assuring them that he was going to address human rights in Cuba during his upcoming visit.[45]

Notes

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3 See Theodore H. MacDonald, *Making a New People: Education in Revolutionary Cuba* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1985).
4 Eugenio Matibag, *Afro-Cuban Religious Experience* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996), 226–259.
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11 Reinaldo Areas, *Before Night Falls*, translated by Dolores M. Kotch (New York: Viking Penguin, 1993), 75.
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20 Samuel Farber, *Cuba since the Revolution of 1959. A Critical Assessment* (Chicago: Haymarkett Books, 2011), 277, 286–291.
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30 Ibid.
31 Enrique Krauze, "Cuba: The New Opening," *The New York Review of Books*, April 2, 2015, p. 52.
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Figure 6.1 Hotel Meliá Santiago de Cuba, Designed by José A. Choy.
Source: Photograph by Andrea Brizzi.

Conclusions

Cuba in 2016

In the first months of 2016, the impending visit of US President Barack Obama to Cuba caused speculation in the United States as well as in Cuba. In the United States, there seemed to be more interest about what Cubans in the United States had to say on that topic than on what Cubans in Cuba thought. On March 16, a few days before this visit, an article by Cuban blogger Yusnaby Pérez was posted, and it was a sober account of mixed feelings. Mr. Pérez warned the US President about how little change had come to Cuba from being open to visitors with the title of his article: "Obama is About to Visit Cuba. He Should Know It Hasn't Changed." He wondered about the consequences of the visit of the US President to Cuba, because many in Cuba believed that the visit was going to bring about changes in the day-to-day life of Cubans, and they were going to find out that the United States was not the cause of the poverty and repression there.[1] Alma Guillermoprieto, who was visiting Cuba at that time, thought that enormous changes had taken place in the island since her previous visit. But she also expressed concern about the expectations that the Cuban people whom she had met had set on the US President's visit, because she feared that they were going to be disappointed.[2]

President Obama's visit to Cuba was different to other head of state's visits to the island. On March 22 he spoke directly to the Cuban people in a speech at the Gran Teatro de La Habana that was broadcasted throughout the island, and in that speech he did not talk about promises or good feelings. He began his speech with a message of reconciliation, but he spoke mostly about ideas and institutions such as freedom of expression, economic free enterprise, and representative government.[3] Although President Obama referred to his speech as a sharing of ideas, it consisted of a calibrated exposition of ideas and institutions that have done well for the United States, which he proposed to his hosts. President Obama delivered this message in respectful and muted terms that were misinterpreted by some of his critics in the United States as apologetic to his communist hosts. But in Cuba opinions differed. Six days after President Obama spoke in Havana, former President of Cuba Fidel Castro Ruz published an evaluation of his speech in *Granma*, the official newspaper of the Cuban Communist Party. In this article, titled "El hermano Obama," he criticized the American President for using sweet words ("palabras almibaradas"), and rejected his conciliatory words and unrequested lessons in political science.[4]

In the United States, immediate reactions to President Obama's visit to Cuba followed partisan lines. But shortly after, business leaders began exploring possibilities that his Cuba policy might open for them, and congressional members of both parties talked about modifying the trade embargo in words not too dissimilar.[5] On May 1, Cardinal Corporation's 704-passenger *Adonia* left port from Miami bound for Havana to begin a cruise that included ports in Havana, Cienfuegos, and Santiago de Cuba.[6] In Cuba the proceedings of the Seventh Congress of the Cuban Communist Party that took place in April 2016 revealed negative reactions to President Obama's visit. Cuba's President Raúl Castro devoted part of his opening report to the Congress rebuking the American President's words in praise of small businesses and civil society.[7] But in Cuba economic change has already been brought about by small businessmen, sometimes with the assistance of wealthy friends or relatives abroad, who are funneling through them millions of dollars in the Cuban economy. By the time Fidel Castro died, on 25 November, a economic transition had taken place in Cuba.

In 2016, Cuba is in no position to refuse foreign investors or visitors, because economic crisis and impending political change in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela may end the supply of 80,000 barrels a day of crude oil that nation sends to Cuba in exchange for the services of Cuban medical specialists and other advisors, and it will need millions of dollars to offset that loss.[8] The boom in visitors has fueled property turnover in areas such as Old Havana, and worried observers express concern about gentrification and growing inequalities in what has been an egalitarian society for many years.[9] Striking inequality was exposed in Havana early in May of 2016, when international celebrities and Cuban Revolutionary Government officers attended the first fashion catwalk show staged in Latin America by the French fashion house Chanel.[10]

Human rights violations persist in Cuba. During US President Obama's visit a reporter questioned President Castro about political prisoners in Cuba, and the latter replied that there were no political prisoners in Cuba. This statement was proved to be inaccurate shortly thereafter, when the news service Univision issued a list including the names of 19 political prisoners held in Cuban prisons.[11] Improvements in economic rights in Cuba in the last five years, like the 2011 law allowing people to sell their properties for the first time since the early years of the Revolutionary Government, have diverted attention from the lack of other civil rights. But violations of human rights in Cuba will not be ignored easily if artist Tania Bruguera is successful in her project to establish a politically agitative project in Cuba, an Institute of Art Activism in Havana.[12]

The Influence of the Past in Cuba's Present

By 1898, a market economy was in place in Cuba, which had fostered prosperity (albeit unequally), and the development of a Western style culture (meaning the adoption and internalization by the general population of educational, cultural, and political concepts originated in Western Europe; as well as familiarity and appropriation by Cuban elites, artisans, and organized workers of ideological frameworks such as liberalism, syndicalism, socialism, Marxism, and anarchism).

The wars of independence of the nineteenth century, as well as the political life that developed in Cuba as an overseas province of Spain with representation in the Madrid parliament (*Cortes*) from 1878 to 1898, fostered a sense of Cubanness in a majority of the adult Cuban-born population of the island. The Platt Amendment imposed by the United States on the drafters of the Cuban Constitution of 1901 created a feeling of impotence (and dependence) towards the United States, but it also created resentment among some Cubans, including members of the elites. The admiration and praise bestowed by Cubans on the United States or US culture, from the nineteenth century until 1958, was not always uncritical, and should not be interpreted always as acquiescence to US hegemony. Although it is true that the annexation of Cuba to the United States was considered desirable by some Cubans settled in the United States, and some Cuban separatists in the nineteenth century, as well as by some residents of Cuba involved in the sugar industry during the first two decades of the twentieth century.

The economic development of Cuba and the cultural traits of Cubans mentioned above explain the relative success of the Republic of Cuba as an independent nation state, despite the limitations imposed on Cuban agency in international political and economic relations by the Platt Amendment. Also they explain the speed of the creation of national public education and public health systems by the Cuban Revolutionary Government in the 1960s, because it created them from already existing systems of education (Cuba had a 75 percent literacy rate in 1958) and public health which were relatively high by international standards. The awareness of Cuban elites, literate artisans and organized workers about Western political ideologies brought about the political participation of a considerable number of Cubans in Cuba during the last 20 years of Spanish sovereignty (1878–1898), and in the Republic of Cuba (1902–1958). The influence of the Cuban Communist Party (founded in 1925) among organized labor in Cuba facilitated the creation in the island of a state controlled economy between 1961 and 1967. The nationalist discourse of the Cuban Revolutionary Government found inspiration in the Cuban wars of independence of the nineteenth century, and in the political writings of Cuban independence leader José Martí. Once expressed in "Cuban" *Martiano* language, it resonated with a wide spectrum of the Cuban population.

The resilience of the Cuban Revolutionary Government and the seeming allegiance to it of a majority of the population of Cuba until today may be explained at least partially by the legitimacy claimed by that government for having brought true independence to Cuba in 1959. But there are certainly economic and political reasons as well. For many years, the Cuban Revolutionary Government obtained financial support from the late Union of Socialist Soviet Republics which allowed it to provide the Cuban population with a minimum diet, and the already-mentioned world-classs educational and public health systems. The hostile stance taken by the United States towards Cuba by imposing an economic embargo, in place since 1960, made credible for many years the claims made by the Cuban Revolutionary Government about the need to restrain public opinion and dissenting views among Cubans, because internal divisions might encourage armed intervention in Cuba by the United States, like in 1898. Also, it is possible

that the massive mobilization of the Cuban population by the Cuban Revolutionary Government to participate in activities against its real and perceived enemies, like being informants in city block surveillance committees (*comités de defensa de la revolución*), and attacking physically dissidents in "acts of repudiation," may keep today many Cubans loyal to it. It is understandable that Cubans who consider that the demise of that government may bring to power the people whom once they denounced will be reluctant to topple it, lest its fall will bring retaliation upon them.

Cuba beyond the Revolutionary Government

The Cuban Revolutionary Government brought so many changes to Cuba between 1959 and 1989 that, in the eyes of many, Cuba has been identified with it. Cuban exiles who rejected it in the early 1960s dream of a Cuba "Without the Castro Brothers," where the positive aspect of Cuba in the 1950s will be recreated. Friends of the Cuban Revolutionary Government consider it to be the warrantor of Cuba's independence from the United States, and fret about the future of Cuba's independence if it goes away. But, the class conscious traditional society that is remembered by exiles is gone, because in the second decade of the twenty-first century that type of society has disappeared from most regions of the world. Cuba and the Cubans are not today what they were in the 1950s, and a regime change in Cuba need not bring about the end of Cuba's independence from the United States, if the international community continues its involvement in economic and cultural exchanges with Cuba, and if a situation of violence and disorder does not develop there like that existing in 1898, which was used by the United States to provoke a war with Spain and to occupy Cuba in the name of humanity.

There is no reason to expect that Cuba will become a protectorate of the United States once again if the Cuban economy were to become a full market economy, and if the Cuban government were to become a truly representative political system. Cuban-Americans and Cuban residents of the United States who think that Cuba would be better governed if it were again a protectorate of its northern neighbor than it is by the Cuban Revolutionary Government may want to reconsider their view, and heed the words of investment banker Dwight Morrow to US Ambassador Enoch Crowder during a 1922 business trip to Havana: "Good governance is not a substitute for self-government."[13] It is a poor-spirited people that underestimates its capacity for self-government, and prefers being governed by a powerful neighbor.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Cubans in Cuba are more secure and proud about their national characteristics than they were in 1959. Today, Cuba has cultural institutions of international reputation such as the Ballet Nacional de Cuba, a highly educated population that has produced literary authors read throughout the world, and artists whose works are bought globally. The Ballet Nacional de Cuba has produced generations of accomplished dancers. Carlos Acosta, a student at its ballet school, became permanent member of the London Ballet, and is considered one of the greatest male

dancers of his generation.[14] Living Cuban popular music composers and performers have been open to foreign influences without losing their Cubanness. In the early 1990s, rap and hip hop were US imports, but by the end of that decade they had found Cuban expressions.[15] *Obsesión*, a rap group, has used its songs as a vehicle for social criticism. In the video "Los pelos," this group criticized Cuban racist concepts of what makes hair to be beautiful and "good." Since 1989, Cuban fiction writers have written powerful works, for example Zoé Valdés's *La nada cotidiana* (1995), and Abilio Estévez's *Los palacios distantes* (2002). The cultural politics of the Revolutionary Government created many art schools throughout the island that have produced exceptionally well trained artists. Works reflecting the Afro-Latin American make-up of Cuban society of some of these artists are both unique and particularly attractive to international art collectors.[16] Most important of all, Cuba is not longer a mere producer of commodities. Although the bulk of Cuban exports is still composed of commodities, Cuba has industrialized, and it exports manufactured goods as diverse as canned fruit and vaccines.[17]

Five hundred years after the arrival of the Spaniards, who brought the Africans, an event that began a hybrid culture in Cuba, this country stands out for the vibrancy of its art, the influence of its writers, and the solidity of its cultural institutions. Guillermina De Ferrara has stated: "There is no doubt that the Cuban Revolution was the most significant cultural and political event of the twentieth-century, not only in Cuba but in all of Latin America."[18] However, while the Cuban Revolution of 1959 and the tenacity of the Cuban Revolutionary Government in pursuing its global revolutionary mission are remarkable, theirs is only a 57-year period in a longer history whose future will continue to defy expectations.

Notes

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