José Martí's philosophy: foundation or horizon of politics? A reevaluation of Martí's position in the face of the class struggle and the war of independence*

La filosofía de José Martí: ¿fundamento u horizonte de la política? Una reevaluación del posicionamiento martiano frente a la lucha de clases y a la guerra de independencia

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Abstract

This paper explores the relationship between José Martí's positions on social conflict and the Cuban War of Independence in the mature stage of his thinking. Contrary to Marxist interpreters, who find a contradiction between Martí's rejection of class struggle and his promotion of armed resistance against Spanish colonialism, we argue that this disparity in positions can be explained by the changing links between philosophy and politics established in the Apostle's thinking. To this end, we identify the main elements of Martí's philosophical matrix, presented in his essay, "Our America," and determine the role it plays in his reflections on class struggle and the War of Independence, namely as the foundation of social reconciliation in the first case and as a post-war utopian horizon in the second.

Keywords. Martí, philosophy, politics, war, social classes.

Resumen

En este trabajo se explora la relación que existe entre los posicionamientos adoptados por José Martí, en la etapa madura de su pensamiento, en torno al conflicto social y a la guerra de independencia cubana. Frente a los intérpretes marxistas, que encuentran una contradicción entre el rechazo de Martí a la lucha de clases y su promoción de la lucha armada contra el colonialismo español, sostenemos que tal disparidad de posturas puede explicarse a partir de los cambiantes vínculos entre filosofía y política que se establecen en el pensamiento del Apóstol. Con dicho objetivo, identificamos los principales elementos de la matriz filosófica martiana, presente en el ensayo "Nuestra América" y determinamos el rol que desempeña en las reflexiones sobre la lucha de clases y sobre la guerra de independencia, a saber: como fundamento de la conciliación social en el primer caso y como horizonte utópico post bélico en el

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segundo.

Keywords. Martí, filosofía, política, guerra, clases sociales.

Introducción

It is well known that, on the one hand, Martí was a determined organizer and promoter of the "necessary war" to end Spanish domination of Cuba, but on the other hand, he strongly distanced himself from Marxism, considering that social revolution was not the way to overcome socioeconomic inequalities. This disparity in positions caught the attention of his most lucid commentators. Fornet-Betancourt (1998) found here a "limitation" (p. 24) of Martí's thinking and considered that there is an "imbalance" (p. 26) between his call for open war against the colonizer and his belief in the goodness of human nature in the context of social conflict. In the same vein, Morán (2010) asked: "How is it possible that someone who advocated for 'necessary war' and even organized a war in which men would have to attack each other —and in the process *become* brutalized—could invoke the 'soft remedy' in contrast to Marx?" (p. 22).

Both authors suggest alternatives to explain this "imbalance." Fornet-Betancourt (1998) explains it by the combination of his "blind faith in the power of love" (p. 22) and his "ideal of a democratic republic" (p. 24), which would peacefully resolve all social conflicts. It is interesting to note that when speaking of "blind faith" and "ideal," Fornet-Betancourt seems to critically note the presence of *irrational* and *idealistic* remnants in Martí's thinking. For his part, Morán (2010) highlights Martí's elitism, which led him, on the one hand, to identify with business interests (p. 9)[1] and to justify the repression of social protest (p. 13); and, on the other hand, to construct workers as a *threatening otherness*, which, ultimately, would show that he had not overcome Sarmiento's civilization-barbarism dichotomy (pp. 4-7)[2].

It should be added that both Fornet-Betancourt and Morán reject what we might call a "tactical" explanation, one of whose exponents would be Fernández Retamar (2018, pp. 85-86). According to this view, Martí believed that the unity of all Cubans was a priority for achieving national liberation and, therefore, that it was counterproductive to encourage class struggle at the same time [3]. But beyond their differences, it is clear that for all three scholars Martí's rejection of class struggle is a negative phenomenon that should be criticized (Fornet-Betancourt, Morán) or exonerated (Fernández Retamar). It can be noted that, ultimately, all of them assume the Marxist conception that class struggle is the engine of history (and, therefore, cannot be conjured away in a class-based society) and that revolution is the only means of ending social inequality. In this way, they position themselves in relation to Martí in a similar way to Marx and Engels (2004) in the *Communist Manifesto* concerning what they called "socialism and critical-utopian communism" (pp. 81-84): they value his criticism of existing society, but believe that the egalitarian horizon to which he aspires lacks real foundation, given that he rejects class struggle and revolution. These elements would only be adequately brought into play by "scientific socialism" (Engels, 1880)[4].

[1] Morán refers to the position adopted by Martí when covering the strike by printers at *Revista Universal* on July 13, 1875. On this point, he disagrees with Fornet-Betancourt (1998), for whom "Martí does not fit, in short, within bourgeois thought because the starting point of his theoretical reflection is not embedded in the rationality of the dominant groups. Martí's reflection is based on the aspirations of the oppressed" (p. 24). Fernández Retamar (2018, pp. 87-89) takes a similar position.

[2] For an opposing view to that of Morán on this topic, see Aguerre (2011).

[3] Another possible resolution of this tension, in an "evolutionary" sense, can be found in Guadarrama González (2014, pp. 238-239). The author points out that, although Martí had rejected class struggle when writing on Marx's death, ten years later he promoted the violent resolution of the colonial conflict with Spain. This would indicate a progressive *radicalization* of his thinking. I believe that this avoids the problem, since Guadarrama does not prove that the choice of armed resistance in the colonial matter was accompanied by an assumption of class struggle in the labor matter. For my part, I will try to show that this is a persistent tension in Martí's thinking.

[4] The same position is taken by Guadarrama González (2018), who argues that Martí, despite his differences with Marxism, was one of the Latin American thinkers who paved the way "... for a better appreciation of Marx's ideas

In contrast to this line of interpretation, I aspire to defend the opposite position, namely, that if there is an inconsistency in Martí's thinking, it is not found in his rejection of class struggle but rather, paradoxically, in his defense of the Cuban War of Independence. To demonstrate this, I will first establish the basic conceptual matrix of Martí's philosophy in his mature period (1880-1895), based on the article "Nuestra América" (1891). On this basis, I will analyze a series of texts published during the same period, in which Martí addresses social conflict and war, determining to what extent his philosophical conception is consistent with his political positions.

Martí's philosophical framework in Nuestra América

The article "Nuestra América" was published on January 1, 1891, in *La Revista Ilustrada de Nueva York*, and was soon reproduced in *El Partido Liberal* de México on January 30 of the same year. It is part of the last stage of José Martí's life and thought (1880-1895), which began with his exile in the United States and culminated with his death on the battlefield at the beginning of the Cuban War of Independence. Although Martí did not adhere to a single philosophical current, nor did he express his thoughts systematically in a single text, commentators such as Raúl Fornet-Betancourt (1998, p. 85) and Yamandú Acosta (2012, pp. 24-31) agree that "Nuestra América" is a work that is highly representative of Martí's philosophy during the period in question. I will accept this postulate and, in particular, the perspective of Acosta (2012, p. 24), who considers that the philosophical character of "Nuestra América" lies in the fact that it formulates a radical way of thinking which, by translating into concepts and categories ways of acting and feeling, institutes a we, a collective subject[5]. In this regard, he proposes that in "Nuestra América" we find, on the one hand, a topical, empirical, and instituted us and, on the other, a utopian "us," from whose tension a *historical, instituting "us"* would emerge (p. 25). I will use both notions to analyze key passages of the text, which will allow me to establish the fundamental features of Martí's philosophical conceptual matrix.

The topical "us"

This first *us* of "Nuestra América" is characterized by a heterogeneity of social elements in conflict with each other. Two quotes are eloquent in this regard. Here is the first: "With our feet in the rosary, our heads white and our bodies painted Indian and Creole, we came, determined, into the world of nations" (Martí, 1891, p. 18). And the second:

> We were a vision, with the chest of an athlete, the hands of a dandy, and the forehead of a child. We were a mask, with English breeches, a Parisian waistcoat, a North American jacket, and a Spanish hat. The Indian, silent, circled around us and went to the mountain, to the summit of the mountain, to baptize his children. The black man, watched, sang the music of his heart at night, alone and unknown, among the waves and the wild beasts. The peasant, the creator, turned, blind with indignation, against the disdainful city, against his creation. We were epaulettes and togas, in countries that came into the world with espadrilles on their feet and headbands on their heads. (p. 20)

Both quotes can be considered complementary, in that they offer two different perspectives on the cliché of us. The first describes a situation of *ethnic mixing*: it is the same body, whose feet and head are associated with a European religion and phenotypic traits—the feet are in contact with a Catholic rosary, the head is "white"—while the rest has Indian and Creole pigmentation. It is important to note that this characterization is formulated from the perspective of the "world of nations."

The second quote reiterates and complicates the issue of identity in three stages. First, it again

on this continent" (p. 126). This appreciation can be found in the works of Mariátegui and Mella. The fact that, for the author, the "better appreciation" of Marx is found in thinkers who decisively embraced Marxist ideas implies granting them a dimension of truth that would have been insufficiently noticed by Martí.

[5]Acosta clearly draws on Arturo Roig, for whom the beginning of Latin American philosophy stems from the a priori assumption that we are valuable and, therefore, that knowing ourselves is valuable. In the words of Acosta (2012), for Roig "… there is no beginning of philosophy without the constitution of a subject" (pp. 27-28).

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refers to a body whose parts correspond to different ages and attitudes: the forehead of a child, the hands of a Frenchified young man, the chest of an athletic adult. Next, mestizaje shifts from body to clothing, which combines English, French, American, and Spanish elements. This reveals that the mestizo being described here is fundamentally a cultural mestizo (unlike the *ethnic mestizo* in the first quote). Finally, in opposition to the idea of mestizaje, a series of subjects are mentioned—Indians, Blacks, and peasants—who are isolated, with no connection to each other. Moreover, these subjects are others in relation to us. Up to this point, Martí had used the first-person plural: "We *were* a vision…", "We *were* a mask…" (p. 20, my italics). But now he refers to the Indian as "us" and speaks of the Black and the peasant in the third person singular. It is thus evident that the us is non-Indian, non-Black, and non-peasant, that is, it is a city-dwelling Creole and, as can be inferred from the previous lines, culturally Europeanized. Although I emphasized that there is no link between the *us* and the *others*, there is one exception, as the peasant "… turned, blind with indignation, against the disdainful city…" (p. 20). So, if there is a relationship between these subjects, it is fundamentally conflictive, marked by negative feelings.

In summary, the quotations outline two situations of mestizaje—ethnic in the first, cultural in the second—that characterize the topical "us" in "Nuestra América". The first, from the perspective of the nation, presents an apparently mestizo "Nuestra América," a successful mixture of European, Creole, and Indian elements. But the second corrects this perspective: upon scrutinizing the social components, it warns that the supposed national mestizaje is not such: in contrast to a Creole, urban, and culturally mestizo us, there are a series of others (Indians, Blacks, and peasants) who live in isolation in non-urban spaces (the mountains, the countryside) and express negative feelings toward *us*, such as indignation. This second perspective allows us to understand the following statement:

> ... America began to suffer, and continues to suffer, from the fatigue of accommodating the discordant and hostile elements it inherited from a despotic and malicious colonizer, and the imported ideas and forms that have been delaying logical government due to their lack of local reality. (Martí, 1891, p. 19)

The *topical, empirical, and established* "us" is characterized by disarticulation: on the one hand, we find "discordant and hostile elements" inherited from the colonial era; on the other, "imported ideas and forms," presumably characteristic of the postcolonial era. Strictly speaking, these are two overlapping disarticulations. To an already heterogeneous and conflictive colonial base, a series of ideas and forms were added that not only failed to remedy the situation but actually exacerbated heterogeneity and conflict, as they were inadequate for the reality to which they were intended to be applied.

The utopian "us"

The starting point has thus been established, Martí's basic observation about the subject of "Nuestra América" : that it does not exist. Or, more precisely, that what exists is a plurality of heterogeneous and potentially conflicting othernesses, which make the *topical* "us" nothing more than "a vision," "a mask." On that basis, the Apostle develops his proposal for a *utopian* "us." This consists of producing a subject based on the harmonious articulation of the underlying social, ethnic, and cultural heterogeneity. This proposal is already present in the lines that follow the preceding quotation:

> The genius would have been in uniting, with the charity of the heart and the daring of the founders, the headband and the toga; in freeing the Indian; in gradually siding with the black man; in adjusting freedom to the bodies of those who rose and won it. (Martí, 1891, p. 20)

It is therefore necessary to "unite" those heterogeneous and hostile elements represented by "the headband and the toga." Such fraternization would mean nothing less than the *foundation* (this is how I understand the expression "with the daring of the founders") of a new collective subject that would be animated by a key emotional component: *charity*. This is nothing less than the name of the Christian virtue that consists of loving God above all things and one's neighbor as oneself. Although Martí explicitly

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rejected any organic adherence to a religion[6], the presence of Christian elements in his thinking is evident. Martínez Gómez (2010) fundamentally highlights Martí's appreciation of the figure of Jesus, the central role he gives to love, and the appeals to sacrifice he makes within the framework of his liberationist project. This assumption of Christianity on the ethical level[7] is combined with a peculiar theism[8], as well as a notable contempt for Catholicism as an institutionalized religion[9].

For all these reasons, I believe that the reference to charity should not be understood in strictly religious terms, but rather within the broader framework of Martí's *humanism*. Guadarrama González (2015) characterizes this humanism as practical and revolutionary, and accounts for its assumption of Christian elements in the following terms: "Martí's humanism, as the transcendent heir to the humanist tradition of the most progressive Latin American thought, was nourished by multiple elements, among which Christianity was undoubtedly one…" (p. 235). In short, Martí's charity would consist of that radical love of one's neighbor, which makes every man a brother; that is why it constitutes the affective engine of the foundational process of "uniting the headband and the toga" to generate a new collective subject.

This interpretation is confirmed by the following assessment made by Martí (1891) of the course of nations in "Nuestra América":

> They tried hatred, and the countries declined year after year. Tired of useless hatred, of the resistance of the book against the spear, of reason against the torch, of the city against the countryside, of the impossible empire of urban castes divided over the natural nation, tempestuous or inert, they begin, as if without knowing it, to try love. (p. 20)

In this case, instead of the word "charity," the Apostle chooses "love." The meaning is the same. The multiple relationships of confrontation between opposing elements (book-spear, reason-torch, city-countryside, urban castes-natural nation), insofar as they are based on *hatred*, can only be resolved by appealing to the opposite feeling, by virtue of which the other ceases to be an enemy and presents himself as a brother.

It should be added that this proposal for loving brotherhood can be considered directed both at social sectors (those represented by "the headband and the toga") and at *nations*. Referring to the territorial conflicts between them, Martí states:

> Those who, under the protection of a criminal tradition, cut off, with a saber stained with the blood of their own veins, the land of the defeated brother, of the brother punished beyond his faults… if they do not want the people to call them thieves, they should return their lands to their brother. (p. 15)

In conclusion, it is necessary to address the political dimension of Martí's proposal. This can be seen in the following words:

[6] In *Notebook* No. 1, written early on during his first exile in Spain, we can read: "I am not sufficiently knowledgeable about each of the religions to be able to say with certainty that I belong to one of them" (Martí, n.d. -a, p. 42).

[7] "Christian, purely and simply Christian. Strict observance of morality, my own improvement, a desire for the improvement of all, a life for the good, my blood for the blood of others; this is the only religion, the same in all climates, the same in all societies, the same and innate in all hearts" (Martí, n.d. -a, p. 18).

[8] "When I was a child, the *unacquired* idea of God was linked to the *acquired* idea of worship (…) the idea of God has survived my old ideas, but the idea of worship has passed away never to return" (Martí, n.d. -a, p. 18). For his part, at the beginning of the work *El presidio político en Cuba (The Political Prison in Cuba)*, he argues: "If the providential God existed, and I had seen him, with one hand he would have covered his face, and with the other he would have cast that denial of God into the abyss. God exists, however, in the idea of good, which watches over the birth of every being and leaves a pure tear in the soul that is incarnated in them. Good is God. The tear is the source of eternal feeling." (Martí, 1871, p. 45).

[9] "The Catholic priesthood is necessarily immoral" (Martí, n.d. -a, p. 16); "The sacraments are simply religious conventions, Catholic conventions" (p. 18); and "Catholicism had a social reason. With that society annihilated and a new society created, the social reason must be different; Catholicism must die" (p. 28).

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> To govern well, one must pay attention to what is there, where one governs; and the good ruler in America is not the one who knows how the Germans or the French govern, but the one who knows what elements his country is made of and how he can guide them together to arrive, through methods and institutions born of the country itself, to that desirable state where every man knows and exercises his rights, and all enjoy the abundance that Nature has provided for all in the land they fertilize with their labor and defend with their lives. The government must be born of the country. The spirit of the government must be that of the country. The form of government must be in accordance with the country's own constitution. Government is nothing more than the balance of the natural elements of the country. (p. 17)

According to Martí's postulate, the foundation of a *utopian* "us" through charity will be the work of the "good ruler." This would be someone who can attend to "what is," knowing the "elements of which their country is made." Such expressions (and all references to "the country") refer to the aforementioned *topical* "us," composed of heterogeneous and conflicting elements. Based on his knowledge, the good ruler could guide this conflicting heterogeneity toward unity, producing "the balance of the natural elements of the country." The notion of *balance* functions here in a manner analogous to the proposal to *unite through love* that we find in the previous quote. Martí will always bet on the solution of conflicts through a plexus of harmonious relationships.

Philosophy of relationship and cosmic harmony

It is important to clarify that this commitment, far from revealing naive optimism, is based on what Rivas Toll (2007) refers to as Martí's "philosophical worldview." The author calls it the "philosophy of relationship," based on the terminology used by the Apostle himself in his notebook annotations, grouped under the title *Judgments. Philosophy.* Thus, when discussing the articulation between subject and object postulated by both Hegel and Krause, he noted: "I took great pleasure when I found in Krause that intermediate philosophy, the secret of the two extremes, which I had thought of calling the Philosophy of Relationship" (Martí, n.d. -b, p. 367). He expressed similar views in other of his judgments on philosophy: "Philosophy is the knowledge of the causes of beings, their distinctions, their analogies, and their relationships" (p. 359); "… Philosophy must study the man who observes, the means by which he observes, and what he observes: Internal Philosophy, External Philosophy, and Philosophy of Relationship" (p. 362); and "The knowledge of the order of communications is philosophy, as far as man is concerned" (p. 369).

Martí's *philosophy* of relation thus seeks to overcome those philosophies that he considers biased and unilateral for having focused restrictively on a single dimension of reality instead of taking a comprehensive approach:

> The study of the tangible world has been called physics; and the study of the intangible world, metaphysics. The exaggeration of that school is called materialism; and the exaggeration of the second is called spiritualism, although it should not be called that. All philosophical schools can be summarized in these two (...) The two together are the truth: each one in isolation is only part of the truth, which falls when it is not aided by the other. (p. 361)

If philosophy must devote itself to studying the relationships between pairs of opposites (subject-object, physics-metaphysics, matter-spirit), it is because these elements and dimensions come about together and are articulated in reality itself. Rivas Toll (2007) calls this philosophical conception of Martí "cosmic harmonism," characterizing it as follows: "In Martí, cosmic harmonism, with its naturalistic aspect, does not detract from the value of man as a subject. Simply put, everything that exists is nature, qualified by harmony, balance, the analogy of regular processes, unity, and diversity" (p. 9). Although the author points out that these ideas show the influence of the aforementioned Krause, we must also add that of Emerson's transcendentalism[10]. In

[10]As Serna Arnáiz (1993) points out, "Such an

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the obituary that Martí published on the occasion of the American philosopher's death, it is clear that, for the author of *Nature*, there was no contradiction in nature, but rather relationships of correspondence between opposites (man-nature, large-small, ideal-practical), which occur analogically at all levels of reality[11].

Echoes of this concept can be seen in "Nuestra América":

> These countries will be saved because, with the genius of moderation that seems to prevail through the serene harmony of Nature on the continent of light, and through the influence of critical reading that has replaced in Europe the tentative and phalanstery reading that soaked the previous generation, the real man is being born in America in these real times (Martí, 1891, pp. 19-20).

For Martí, there is a "secret harmony of Nature" that contributes to the reign of "the genius of moderation," an expression that we must understand once again as the establishment of a middle ground or an articulation between opposing elements. Clearly, the quote does not suggest that this moderation can be achieved solely through the harmonious influence of Nature; "critical reading" is also necessary, that is, the action of intellectuals who do not limit themselves to mechanically applying ideas and forms that are foreign to a reality that cannot be accommodated to such molds. In short, an articulation is required between the objective (the secret harmony of Nature) and the subjective (critical reading).

We thus find a direct correlation between the *philosophy of relationship* and *cosmic harmony*, on the one hand, and the political process of founding a *utopian* "us" through charity, on the other. For the harmonious totality of relationships between opposites that characterizes Nature also constitutes the foundation of the social world (insofar as it too is part of Nature). And just as the philosopher must study reality by overcoming the division between unilateral spheres (physical and metaphysical) and schools (materialism and spiritualism), the good ruler must be aware of this "secret harmony" and develop the "genius of moderation" to promote fraternity where heterogeneous and conflicting elements prevail[12]. Krausism, transcendentalism, and Christianity are associated in this chain of nature, philosophy, and politics.

To conclude this section, it is worth offering an example of what has been said, considering the position that Martí adopts towards racism in "Nuestra América." In his words: "There is no hatred of races, because there are no races" (p. 22). However, the fact that there are no races does not mean that there are no people who create racial divisions and oppositions among human beings: "Weak-minded thinkers, lamp-lit thinkers, string together and reheat

affinity of criteria between both philosophies, as we will point out, makes it difficult or impossible on many occasions to discern and separate these tendencies in Martí's thinking. The process, we believe, consisted of incorporating Krausist ideas into the transcendentalist ideas of the American writer, due to their unity of criteria and as happened in Cuba, where Krausism appeared united with transcendentalism" (p. 138).

[11] Martí refers to Emerson's conception in various texts, for example: "He sees only analogies: he finds no contradictions in nature: he sees that everything in it is a symbol of man, and everything in man is in it. He sees that nature influences man, and that man makes nature joyful, or sad, or eloquent, or mute, or absent, or present, at his whim" (Martí, 1882a, p. 22); and "For him, there is no contradiction between the great and the small, nor between the ideal and the practical, and the laws that will bring about the final triumph and the right to be crowned with stars bring happiness on earth. Contradictions are not found in nature, but in the fact that men do not know how to discover their analogies" (p. 29). In this sense, Pampín (2016) points out that the notion of "natural man," which in "Nuestra América" appears applied to the non-Europeanized American settler, is taken from Emerson's philosophy, insofar as it refers to "… he who is in harmony with nature and traversed by history…" (p. 55).

[12] Given the difficulty of dating the notes on philosophy found in Martí's notebooks, it could be argued that they convey early ideas that the Apostle would later abandon. However, these ideas are perfectly consistent with those expressed in the prologue to the *Poema del Niágara* by the Venezuelan Juan Antonio Pérez Bonalde, which Martí wrote in 1882, already in the context of his stay in the United States (that is, in what we have identified as his mature period). There, he states: "Philosophy is nothing more than the secret of the relationship between the various forms of existence" (Martí 1882b, p. 232).

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the races of the library" (p. 22). "Races," then, are not natural realities, but bookish artifices of certain thinkers (who, presumably, do not practice a "critical reading" of nature); but even though they do not exist, they produce negative effects on the human collective, since they foment hatred instead of the love of neighbor that should prevail. Thus, Martí conceptualizes racism in terms of sin[13]: ", he who fosters and propagates opposition and hatred between races sins against humanity" (p. 22). In the face of these attempts, his counterproposal consists of observing Nature (with the eyes of a philosopher and a good ruler):

> ... the just traveler and the cordial observer search in vain [for the races of the library] in the justice of Nature, where the universal identity of man stands out in victorious love and turbulent appetite. The soul emanates, equal and eternal, from bodies diverse in form and color... (p. 22).

It should be noted here that Martí attributes "justice" to Nature, which is identified with the *equality* of all human beings. The greatest injustice would then be to suggest that some human beings are superior to others "by nature," a thesis dear to colonialism since the writings of Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda and his reception of political Aristotelianism. On the contrary, Martí's Nature does not base itself on conflict and the domination of some over others, but rather on the constitution of a collective subject through fraternal love.

Having established a series of fundamental features of his philosophical position, we will now turn to those texts in which the Apostle takes a stance on two types of conflict: class struggle and the War of Independence. We will evaluate how these writings bring into play the elements that, based on what has been developed, we consider to be part of Martí's philosophical conceptual matrix: the relationality of the real, naturalistic cosmic harmonism, and the foundation of a *utopian* "us" through charity as *the telos* of politics.

Class struggle

As we have already mentioned, Martí resided in the United States during the period of his work that we are analyzing, and is therefore a contemporary of various processes of organization and struggle by workers that took place in the context of the development of American industrial capitalism. I will briefly refer to some of his statements on this subject In the second section of the letter he sent to the editor of the newspaper *La Nación* on July 15, 1882, he directly addressed the social conflict that characterized the era. He begins with the following words: "We are in the midst of a struggle between capitalists and workers" (Martí, 1882c, p. 324). Beyond this general statement, the author draws a sharp distinction between the European and American situations:

> Workers' associations, which have been unsuccessful in Europe and disfigured by their own creators, because they have proposed violent and unjust political remedies as well as fair social remedies, are successful in North America because they have only proposed to remedy the visible and remediable evils of the workers by peaceful and legal means (p. 323).

Martí thus diagnosed the supposed *distortion* that European unions had undergone resorting to violence and injustice. In contrast, American workers used "peaceful and legal means." It is thus clear that, as in "Nuestra América," the author conceives of justice as the antithesis of violent conflict and, presumably, of the hatred it entails. A few lines later, referring to a strike by railroad porters in New York, he states that "The whole city is on the side of the neglected porters" (p. 323); and on the following page he adds:

> Today, Italians, Germans, and Russian

[13] One could explore the relationship between this postulation of Humanity as an entity before which one can sin, and the "Religion of Humanity" founded by Comte, which gave rise to various positivist apostolates in Latin America, particularly in Brazil and Chile. Although Martí's ideas clearly differ from those of positivism (his criticism of the notion of "race" is testimony to this), he lived in a context of complete hegemony of this school of thought and considered that some of its proposals could be accepted (such as the empirical study of nature), provided that it was recognized that it was a biased conception, which addressed only the physical and material aspects of reality. In this regard, see Ramaglia (2018, pp. 146-147).

> Jews, embracing each other fraternally in the streets and attending enthusiastic meetings where all languages are spoken equally, are demanding that the railroad companies, which recently increased freight prices without justification, provide new wages and new guarantees (p. 324).

Martí highlights both the citizens' support for the strikers and the fact that their struggle is being carried out "fraternally," through a harmonious communion of different nationalities. But at the end of his account of this process, he warns:

> This is justice so far. May good fortune dictate that, once satisfied, it does not turn into zeal and anger. Because in this town of workers, an offensive alliance of workers will be tremendous. They are already in it. The combat will be such that it will move and shake the Universe. (p. 325)

With these words, the Apostle points out that the justice of the workers' cause is temporary; it can become its opposite if peace and legality are replaced by "zeal and anger," that is, if the defensive league becomes "offensive." It is thus clear that Martí not only values the harmony that articulates the different languages and nationalities among the workers, as well as that which occurs between just strikers and citizens, but also aspires to see it happen in the bond between capitalists and workers, once the latter's just demands are met. This would become impossible if the workers decided to go on the offensive, guided by the uncharitable sentiment of anger. The validity of these reflections on the philosophical conceptual matrix that would later be embodied in "Nuestra América" is complete.

This is not an exception. Almost a year later, on the occasion of Marx's death, Martí (1883) expressed the same ideas. He argued that in cities there is an "angry army of workers," composed of "fanatics for love and fanatics for hate"; that the French, Germans, Russians, Italians, and Austrians do not hate each other, "since they are all united by a common hatred"; and that the context of political freedom in which American workers live makes it difficult for the hatred of European workers to spread to America (p. 387). At the same time, while he praises Marx for "taking the side of the weak" and for "awakening the sleepers," he also reproaches him for "pitting men against men" and, referring to the Russian Marxists, asserts: "it is not yet these impatient and generous men, stained with anger, who will lay the foundation for the new world" (p. 388).

For Martí, anger, hatred, and worker offensives are not the way to solve social injustices, mainly because they undermine his fundamental philosophical matrix. We can see this clearly when, after acknowledging that Marx "studied ways to establish the world on new foundations," he adds:

> But he moved quickly and somewhat in the shadows, without seeing that children who have not undergone natural and laborious gestation [italics added] are not born viable, neither from the womb of the people in history nor from the womb of a woman in the home. (p. 388)

It seems that the "new world"—presumably a just world—must be produced in accordance with nature, that is, not through hatred and violent class conflict, but through patient work of harmonious, charitable, and fraternal reconciliation. Martí's words (1886) in his chronicles on "Great workers' riots" are very illustrative of this process. There he asks:

> Who will prevail, the moderate workers who, with their sights set on a complete social reorganization, propose to achieve it by using their united vote to draft laws that will allow them to do so without violence, or those who, with the force of anger accumulated century upon century in the despotic lands of Europe, have come from there with a workshop of hatred in each breast and want to achieve social reorganization through crime, through arson, theft, fraud, murder, and "contempt for all morality, law, and order"? (p. 447)

The "natural and laborious gestation" of *the new world* (referred to here as "an absolute social reorganization") will be carried out by means of laws, through the joint vote of the "moderate workers." Strikes without hatred, conciliation with employers, and parliamentary agreements, rather than class struggle, are the appropriate means to enshrine social justice. It thus becomes evident that there is no

contradiction between Martí's philosophical matrix and his position on socio-economic conflict[14]. The foundational role of a collective subject that in "Nuestra América" was attributed to the good ruler is here attributed to the political action of the workers. It remains for us to analyze to what extent the Apostle's positions on the War of Independence are compatible with this conceptual framework.

The War of Independence

The first thing to note in this last section is that, as the organizer and promoter of the Cuban War of Independence, Martí often added a series of adjectives to the noun "war" that reflected its forced, unwanted nature: he called it "inevitable," "unavoidable," and "necessary." In all the documents in which he dealt with this topic, whether they were texts for the general public, letters, or circulars for the armed forces, the Apostle's position is clear: war must be waged because there is no other political alternative for the well-being of Cuba. I would like to pause briefly, then, on Martí's rejection of the other two political alternatives that existed in his context: autonomism (which promoted the enactment of a constitution and the establishment of a government and a deputation in which Cubans would be represented, without separating from the sovereignty of the Spanish crown)[15] and annexationism (which aspired to Cuba becoming part of the United States of America)[16].

Regarding autonomism, Martí first highlights its illusory and transient nature. In a letter to Serafín Bello, he stated, "Autonomism is a dream […] autonomism will dissipate, like the shadow that it is" (Martí, 1889, p. 253). On the other hand, he emphasized the practical ineffectiveness of this political position: in narrating the proclamation of the Cuban Revolutionary Party, he argued that, until then, Cuba and Puerto Rico had been "… abandoned to the fruitless guidance of the party of permanent error, the autonomist party" (Martí 1892d, p. 389). Martí explains both the provisional nature and the ineffectiveness of autonomism because, ultimately, it does not represent Cuban reality, that is, its *nature*. In "La agitación autonomista" (The Autonomist Agitation), he asks "… whether the recent actions of the autonomist party are due to the unanimous desire to return, with noble contrition, to the truth of the country…" (Martí, 1892b, p. 332), indicating that the party has strayed from that truth. He later adds that "The autonomist party has been serving as a dam for the revolution, and the revolution will burst forth as soon as the force of the waters breaks the dam" (p. 333). Martí thus posits the inevitable natural force of the revolution, as opposed to the artificiality of the autonomist proposal, represented by the dam.

The Apostle thought the same about annexationism. In publications in the newspaper Patria, he referred to "… the three passing phenomena of Cuban politics: annexationism, autonomism, and anarchism" (Martí, 1892f, p. 114); or he argued that "… the annexationist remedy is not, apart from its many obstacles, sufficiently precise and mature to serve as an immediate solution to the island's immediate problem" (Martí, 1892e, p. 48). In response to this, he proposed the need to resort to the action of the Cuban Revolutionary Party, that is, "… the most prepared and possible solution, the popular and historical solution, the *natural and inevitable* solution […] - the preliminary war of independence" (p. 48, my italics).

However, war was not only presented in these texts as a "natural and inevitable" solution to the artificial illusions of autonomism and annexationism; Martí expected positive effects from it, namely, the overcoming of the state of indignity in which the Cuban people found themselves. In the article entitled "Nuestras ideas" (Our Ideas)—a statement of principles by the newspaper *Patria*, which appeared in its first issue—Martí (1892a) stated that "War (…) is the inevitable consequence of the continuous, disguised or blatant denial of the conditions necessary for the happiness of a people who refuse to be corrupted or disordered in misery" (p. 315). He added:

> When a people, composed of the ill-fated hand of its owners with elements of hatred and dissociation, emerged from the first test of war, above the dissensions that ended it, more united than when it entered it, war would become, instead of

[14] For an insightful analysis of these and other sources that reveal Martí's position on the struggles of American workers, see Morán (2010, pp. 12-23).

[15] See Bizcarrondo (1999) for a discussion of autonomist ideas and practices between 1878 and 1898.

[16] In this regard, see Morejón Sardiñas (2011).

> a delay in its civilization, a new period of amalgamation indispensable for bringing together its diverse factors into a secure and useful republic. (p. 316)

According to these quotes, war should carry out the same task that, in previous sections, Martí had attributed to politics: to produce unity and amalgamation—the "secure and useful republic"—from a social base of "diverse factors," "hatred and dissociation" produced by long Spanish colonialism . In this sense, a few days later, in the aforementioned "La agitación autonomista" (The Autonomist Agitation), he pointed out that "War must be waged to avoid wars" (Martí, 1892b, p. 332) and that

> if the revolution is the creation of a free and just people from the fragmented and even mutually unfamiliar elements of a feudal colony, the revolutionary work consists of merging and guiding all these elements without any of them acquiring disproportionate dominance, which would undermine the sympathy of the others through mistrust, or through a lack of equity among the ignorant or the educated, and put the revolutionary work in danger. (p. 332)

In this way, war has an instituting political function: to *found* a new republic and a new people based on the fusion of conflicting and heterogeneous elements; this fusion does not imply the loss of identity of these elements but, as can be inferred from the quote, their articulation through *proportion, sympathy*, and *equity*. Here we see the reappearance of Martí's philosophical matrix, this time applied to the political outcome of the War of Independence. It should be noted that Martí is confident that this war will not lead to further wars, but rather to peace[17], precisely because of the success of the resulting harmonious articulation.

To achieve this outcome, the Apostle considers it necessary, once again, to banish hatred from the field of political affectivity, promoting brotherly love[18]. Thus, in "El partido revolucionario cubano," he speaks of "…war without hatred, through which a hard-working and just republic will be achieved" (Martí, 1892c, pp. 368-369); in "La Revolución" he states that Cubans are "… a people who do not rush into war to satisfy a hatred they do not feel, but rather to free themselves and achieve justice"[19] (Martí, 1894a, p. 79); In "El tercer año del Partido Revolucionario Cubano," dated April 17, 1894, he proposes: "Let our motto be: freedom without anger" (Martí, 1894b, p. 141); and finally, in the "Manifiesto de Montecristi," he states that those who fomented the war "… declare in its name before the homeland their freedom from all hatred, their fraternal indulgence toward timid or misguided Cubans…" (Martí, 1895, p. 94). For Martí, the Spanish were not enemies to be hated; in fact, he offered the Spanish the opportunity to be part of this new people and this new republic, another element in this harmonious, just, and fraternal articulation of heterogeneities:

> We Cubans started the war, and we Cubans and Spaniards will end it. Do not mistreat us, and you will not be mistreated. Respect us, and you will be respected. Let steel respond to steel, and friendship to friendship. There is no hatred in the Antillean heart... (p. 97)

In short, the revolutionary war appears as a natural and inevitable force insofar as it constitutes the only feasible alternative for overcoming Cuba's situation. The conquest of freedom by arms but without hatred, guarantees the possibility of harmoniously articulating the heterogeneous and conflicting elements of Cuban society, giving birth to a new people and a republic that, governed by fraternity and justice, will ensure dignity and peace for the future.

Conclusions

Taking as a starting point the criticisms of Fornet-Betancourt and Morán, who denounced an inconsistency in Martí's positions on social conflict

[17] Gallegos (2013, p. 27) finds here an echo of Kant's thinking on *perpetual peace*.

[18] Machiavelli is mentioned by Gallegos (2013, p. 27) as a precursor to this argument.

[19] According to Gallegos (2013, p. 27), Martí takes up Francisco de Vitoria's postulates on just *war* at this point.

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and the war of independence, throughout this work I evaluated those positions in light of Martí's philosophical conception. Taking into account what has been developed in the last two sections, I can conclude that there is indeed a disparity in the way the Apostle addresses both issues, but this disparity has characteristics that differ from those pointed out by the aforementioned commentators. From my perspective, what happens is that Martí brings his philosophical conceptual matrix (composed of the relationality of reality, cosmic harmonism, and the idea of founding a collective subject through love for one's neighbor) into play in a different way in each case. On the one hand, he rejects class struggle, promoting a harmonious reconciliation of the interests of capitalists and proletarians. On the other hand, he incites the War of Independence, arguing that there is no possible reconciliation between the interests of Cubans and Spaniards and that, in any case, harmony will come about after freedom has been won by force of arms. In other words, when faced with two situations of antagonistic contradiction (capitalists-proletarians, colonizers-colonized), the idea of a harmonious, natural, and loving relationship is applied as a means in the first case and as an end in the second.

Martí's decision is complemented by the role he attributes to the emotion of hatred in each case. In the conflict between capitalists and proletarians, class struggle is interpreted as an expression of hatred and, therefore, as an obstacle to the construction of a new humanity, which should be based on love for one's neighbor. Meanwhile, in the case of the conflict between colonizers and colonized, the War of Independence is characterized as devoid of hatred, which makes it a just means of achieving a higher stage of Cuban society. In short, following Martí's line of argument, the capitalist-proletarian contradiction appears to be harmonizable according to Nature, while the colonizer-colonized contradiction is "unnatural" and must be overcome in order to bring political relations into line with the pattern established by Nature.

However, contrary to the views of Fornet-Betancourt and Morán, Martí's rejection of class struggle appears to be perfectly consistent with his philosophical matrix. Paradoxically, we note that it was more difficult to reconcile this matrix with a political position favorable to the War of Independence. For this to be feasible, Martí had to argue that the war between Cubans and Spaniards was both *inevitable* (i.e., that there was no possible harmonization between the two antagonistic poles) and *devoid of hatred* (otherwise he could not have presented it as the foundation of a future sociability based on love for one's neighbor). But the truth is that both arguments function as axioms, without ever being proven. Martí does not explain why solutions such as those proposed by autonomism—which would precisely entail a harmonization between Cuban and Spanish interests without resorting to war—would be impracticable. He merely states that they do not conform to "the truth" and that they constitute unnatural obstacles to the natural flow of the revolution. But this approach seems to naturalize not harmony, but war. At this point, Martí does not completely abandon his conceptual framework, but *he temporarily suspends its validity*, decreeing that war is natural in the present, while harmony will be its (also natural) future result.

At the same time, we may ask ourselves whether war without hatred is possible, and even more so, whether a war that ends all wars is possible. To what extent can the legitimization of the murder of the other, even the colonizer, be carried out without hatred and, at the same time, give rise to a postcolonial society structured by fraternal relations? What are the limits and scope of a state of fraternity that could only be accessed by those who have not opposed its establishment, under threat of death? There are no answers to these questions in Martí's reflections on war.

In short, we can conclude that it is not an insufficiently assumed Marxism that generates contradictions in Martí's thinking about socio-economic conflict. It is his conceptual philosophical matrix that reveals itself to be both adequate and inadequate in relation to his political positions. It is adequate to justify his rejection of class struggle; in this case, as we have seen, his political position seems to derive directly from a prior philosophical foundation. But this matrix proves inadequate to justify his pro-independence, anti-colonial, and revolutionary stance, as well as his rejection

of autonomy and annexation as viable political paths for Cuba. However, instead of modifying or abandoning it, Martí decides to alter the role that his philosophical matrix plays in relation to the political sphere: it no longer operates as a foundation, but rather limits itself to prefigurating the post-war utopian horizon, leaving the development of war in the hands of political pragmatism.

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