Hispanic American Historical Review 66:3

CCC 0018-2168/86/$1.50

Evolution of Cuban Separatist Thought in the Emigré Communities of the United States, 1848–1895

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THROUGHOUT the final half of the nineteenth century, Cuban emigré communities in New York, New Orleans, Key West, Tampa, and numerous other cities in the United States served as guardians and adherents of the separatist ideal. They maintained the political viability of separatism even when on the island the movement seemed dormant and unpopular. Most of the primary separatist leaders at one time or another traveled to or resided in the United States, and many of the movement's ideological formulations emerged from these communities. While the importance of the expatriate centers in maintaining and developing separatist thought has been noted in the historical literature on the Cuban independence process, few studies have examined in detail the emigré centers and the dynamics of their ideological evolution.[1] This is particularly surprising since it was in the emigré centers—and not Cuba—that separatist debates were conducted freely and publicly. And although it is not possible to argue that emigré thinking exactly paralleled separatist thought in Cuba, the exile centers did represent an important segment of the Cuban separatist community that cannot be ignored if we hope to advance our understanding of the Cuban independence process in general.

The study of emigré opinion is of particular interest for gaining an understanding of the dynamics of change in separatist thought between

1. The only overview of emigré separatism is Juan J. E. Casasús, *La emigración cubana y la independencia de la patria* (Havana, 1953). Three important community studies of Key West and Tampa are Gerardo Castellanos y García, *Motivos de Cayo Hueso (Contribución a la historia de las emigraciones revolucionarias cubanas en los Estados Unidos)* (Havana, 1935); Manuel Deulofeu, *Héroes del destierro. La emigración. Notas históricas* (Cienfuegos, 1904); and José Rivero Muñiz, "Los cubanos en Tampa," *Revista Bimestre Cubana*, 74:1 (Jan.–June 1958), 5–140. The separatist movement in New York is traced in Enrique Trujillo, *Apuntes históricos: Propaganda y movimientos revolucionarios cubanos en los Estados Unidos desde enero de 1880 hasta febrero de 1895* (New York, 1896). None of these deal significantly with separatist thought.

the late 1840s and 1895. For the most part, existing literature has failed to consider the development of Cuban separatism as a single, evolving process. Numerous works focus on each distinct historical period (e.g., the annexationist years, 1840s–50s; the Ten Years War, 1868–78; the interwar years, 1878–95; and the War of Independence, 1895–98), but the tendency has been to view each in isolation.[2] The evolution of separatism from one period to the next has been conspicuously overlooked, or, at best, considered only briefly.[3] This essay attempts to provide an overview of emigré separatism, focusing on its evolution from what in essence was an economically liberal way of thinking that advocated Cuba's annexation to the United States in the 1840s–50s, to an ideology by the 1890s intent not only on ensuring Cuban independence, but seeking socioeconomic change and broader participation by the Cuban people in defining the new nation.

This process may be thought of as occurring during three chronological periods. The movement's transition from an annexationist, diplomatically oriented cause that did not threaten slavery, to an insurgent, self-determinist, and openly abolitionist movement was the first step, and occurred between the late 1840s and 1868. During the Ten Years War, emigré separatism made a second important transition from simply self-determinist to overwhelmingly *independentista*. The final transformation before the outbreak of the War of Independence in 1895 was from a liberal movement to a popular cause seeking socioeconomic change on the island.

Continuity—or the lack of it—between the separatist movement of the 1840s–50s and separatism of the late 1860s and the following decade has been the subject of dispute in Cuban historiography. Traditional studies view the annexationism of the 1850s as an early manifestation of Cuban nationalism which eventually led to the proindependence philosophy of the Ten Years War. A revisionist literature rejects the existence of this ideological continuity between the two periods. It makes a sharp distinction between what it considers the proslavery and antinationalist separatism of the 1850s and the abolitionist, highly nationalistic movement of

2. A comprehensive overview of the literature on Cuban separatism is included in the following sources: José Manuel Pérez Cabrera, *Historiografía de Cuba* (Mexico City, 1962); Luis Marino Pérez, *Bibliografía de la Revolución de Yara* (Havana, 1908); Aleida Plasencia, comp., *Bibliografía de la Guerra de los Diez Años* (Havana, 1968); Biblioteca Nacional José Martí, *Bibliografía de la Guerra Chiquita, 1879–1880* (Havana, 1975), and José Martí, *Bibliografía de la Guerra de Independencia (1895–1898)* (Havana, 1976).

3. Useful studies in this regard are Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring, *La guerra libertadora de los treinta años* (Havana, 1952); Vidal Morales y Morales, *Iniciadores y primeros mártires de la revolución cubana* (Havana, 1901); Raúl Cepero Bonilla, *Azúcar y abolición (Apuntes para una historia crítica del abolicionismo)* (Havana, 1971); and Jorge Ibarra, *Ideología mambisa* (Havana, 1967).

the late 1860s, whose annexationism was a transitory aberration.[4] The former is characterized as a reactionary phenomenon that in no way contributed to the latter. Neither historiographical tradition, however, has yet examined in detail the dynamics of separatist thought throughout these years.

During the nineteenth century, the growing economic relationship between Cuba and the United States combined with increasing political and economic dissatisfaction on the island to create small, but active, Cuban communities in Gulf and Atlantic coastal cities of the United States. The communities were numerically insignificant in the context of the North American immigration experience, but they exerted substantial influence on Cuba's political development and on North American–Spanish relations throughout the century. Originally settling in New York, Philadelphia, and New Orleans, Cubans moved to the United States for economic, educational, and political reasons. Those with political grievances organized so effectively that the communities gained reputations as centers of separatist agitation.

Many of these emigrants arrived in the United States during the 1840s when separatism emerged to take a prominent place in Cuba's political consciousness. Not since the Spanish American wars of independence had significant sentiment existed in Cuba for separation from Spain.[5] A variety of factors, however, now combined to make a break with the mother country attractive. And, while some sentiment had always existed for the establishment of an independent Cuban republic, separatism during this time was for the most part synonymous with annexation to the United States—a definition that enjoyed substantial support among sectors of the island's socioeconomic elites. Some Cubans with clear slaveholding interests, such as Cristóbal Madan and José Luis Alfonso, joined with a considerably larger number of professionals (e.g., lawyers, journalists, bureaucrats), merchants, and intellectuals (e.g., Gaspar Betancourt Cisneros, Porfirio Valiente, José Sánchez Iznaga, Juan C. Zenea, and Cirilo Villaverde), in spearheading the annexationist movement in the United States. For the most part, these men were fundamentally committed to a liberal vision of Cuba's future. They advocated commercial freedom, representative gov-

4. The traditional interpretation may be found in Herminio Portell Vilá, *Narciso López y su época*, 3 vols. (Havana, 1930–1958), I, 210–216, and Morales y Morales, *Iniciadores y primeros mártires*. The revisionist view is best expressed in Ibarra, *Ideología mambisa*, pp. 44–46.

5. For information on the early separatist conspiracies see José Luciano Franco, *La conspiración de Aponte* (Havana, 1963); Roque E. Gárrigo Salido, *Historia documentada de la conspiración de los Soles y Rayos de Bolívar*, 2 vols. (Havana, 1929); Adrián Valle, *Historia documentada de la conspiración de la Gran Legión del Águila Negra* (Havana, 1930).

ernment, the immediate suppression of the slave trade, and an eventual indemnified abolition of slavery. But they believed that this could be accomplished only under the guidance of North American constitutional structures.[6]

Most emigrés saw commercial and political advantages in annexation, but it was the slave question that convinced them an independent republic was not feasible. Cuban separatists for the most part understood that slavery could not be maintained indefinitely, but they called for abolition only over the long term. Their immediate activities focused on achieving annexation to the United States, under whose tutelage they felt Cuba would eventually rid itself of slavery. In the North American republic, they believed, the abolition of slavery was not only feasible but in sight. Betancourt Cisneros argued that the United States was well on the road to a gradual, indemnified, and peaceful abolition by the late 1840s. "In the end slavery will be eliminated, but it will be done as it should be," he noted, "the gangrene will be removed by an expert surgeon and not with a butcher's axe."[7] Madan backed annexation because slavery would be guaranteed in the immediate future, but at the same time would not be "beyond the moral influence of civilization which slowly prepares its [slavery's] peaceful termination." According to Madan, gradual abolition in a relatively short period was possible in the United States because the absence of the slave trade had produced a slave population free "from superstitious, and ungovernable, and ferocious habits." A large percentage of Cuban slaves, he noted, were "savage" Africans, too "disposed to engage in insurrectionary attempts," and thus not yet ready for freedom.[8] Thus, eventual Cuban abolition required the definitive suppression of the slave trade, which would come with annexation.

At the same time, separatist propagandists continually condemned all efforts to rid the island of slavery immediately. In their view, a radical abolition not only threatened social stability and economic prosperity, but

6. See Gaspar Betancourt Cisneros, *Ideas sobre la incorporación de Cuba a los Estados Unidos, en contraposición a lo que ha publicado Don José Antonio Saco* (New York, 1849); *Cartas a Saco* (Havana, 1937); *Cartas del Lugareño* (Havana, 1951). Also, Lorenzo Alló, *La esclavitud doméstica en sus relaciones con la riqueza. Discurso pronunciado en El Ateneo de Nueva York, en la noche del 1ero de enero de 1854* (New York, 1854), and the following emigré newspapers of the 1850s: *El Mulato, El Papagayo, El Pueblo,* and *El Eco de Cuba.* For background information on many of these activists, see Hugh Thomas, *Cuba: The Pursuit of Freedom* (New York, 1971), pp. 207–232.

7. Gaspar Betancourt Cisneros to José Antonio Saco, Oct. 19, 1848, in *Medio siglo de historia colonial de Cuba, 1823–1879,* José A. Fernández de Castro, ed. (Havana, 1923), p. 93.

8. See pamphlet by Cristóbal Madan published under the pseudonym León Fragua de Calvo, *Contestación a un folleto titulado: Ideas sobre la incorporación de Cuba en los Estados Unidos, por Don José A. Saco, que le dirige uno de sus amigos* (New York, 1850).

violated the sacred rights of private property. As one prominent emigré newspaper, *El Filibustero*, edited by Juan and Francisco Bellido de Luna, noted, "The [separatist] revolution will not mortally wound established interests; it will protect them; it will not incite disastrous and savage conflagrations; it will repress them."[9] The emigré communities reacted harshly to suggestions by Spain during the early 1850s that Cuba adopt a British-inspired plan to replace slavery with a contract labor program which would provide the island with African apprentices. Such a plan, argued *El Filibustero*, would result in the introduction to Cuba over the next ten years of a million and a half "African savages," who would then pose an immediate danger to Cuban white society. The separatists, as well as most white Cubans on the island, abhorred what they perceived to be the continuing "Africanization" of Cuba. They believed that if Cuba were part of the United States, the influx of blacks to the island would cease, and white immigration would eventually overwhelm the resident black population. In fact, efforts to "whiten" the island through immigration promotion had been going on since the 1840s with the active participation of Betancourt Cisneros and another prominent separatist, Domingo Goicouría.[10] Ironically, their racism and fear of blacks motivated them to seek alternatives to slavery.

It is clear that within the separatist movement the question of slavery was not only central but complex. Historians have disagreed over whether the movement was proslavery or abolitionist, and it should be recognized that motivations among emigrés differed. But the inevitable conclusion must be that while most separatists were not primarily concerned with preserving slavery, their opposition to an immediate abolition in effect favored slave interests both in Cuba and the United States.[11]

While exiles were virtually unanimous in their opposition to immediate abolition, they could not agree on how best to effect their homeland's annexation to the United States. One group, led by Betancourt Cisneros, looked to diplomacy and a highly controlled transfer of the island. They operated a junta in New York from 1848 to 1855, with financial support from Havana separatists of the annexationist Club de la Habana, and they encouraged United States politicians to negotiate a purchase of the island from Spain. During 1849 and 1850, the junta flirted with the possibility of

9. *El Filibustero*, Feb. 15, 1854.

10. C. Stanley Urban, "The Africanization of Cuba Scare, 1853–1855," *HAHR*, 37:1 (Feb. 1957), 29–45; *El Filibustero*, Aug. 12, 15, 1853, Feb. 15, 1854; and Duvon C. Corbitt, "Immigration in Cuba," *HAHR*, 22:2 (May 1942), 298–301.

11. Portell Vilá, *Narciso López*, I, 186–109 argues that in general the emigrés were not acting to preserve slavery. On the other hand, Sergio Aguirre, *Eco de caminos* (Havana, 1974), pp. 403–448, rejects this view and condemns most emigrés as willing agents of proslavery interests.

armed action by providing financial assistance to the noted annexationist filibusterer Narciso López, but they quickly reconsidered after a first expedition failed. Essentially cautious men, the New York separatists were uncomfortable with the potential for social unrest—particularly among slaves and free blacks—should civil conflict erupt in Cuba. They also considered López a dangerous adventurer they could not control. In a letter to López during early 1850, for example, the New York junta informed him they could not collaborate in his efforts to organize a second expedition. The first effort had convinced the New York emigrés that in the future they had to proceed with greater "circumspection and security." "Your intention to invade Cuba without the expressed and decided cooperation of Cuban property owners, without an organization, sufficient force and adequate means . . . would be a desperate act." Moreover, the correspondence noted that "without the proper consensus," an invasion could lead to "disastrous calamities" that López himself would eventually regret.[12] From 1852 to 1855 the junta contracted with General John Quitman, a noted proslavery annexationist from Mississippi, to organize another round of filibustering expeditions. In fact, however, expeditionary organizing was aimed primarily at pressuring Spain to sell the island to the United States. The junta's policy was to prepare expeditions that might invade the island if the diplomatic avenue failed. As it happened, the United States government expressed its disapproval of Quitman's operations, and the whole scheme was abandoned in 1855.[13]

By the mid–1850s, it was clear to most emigrés connected with the New York junta that Spain would not sell the island and that the United States could not be expected to press the issue outside diplomatic channels. Moreover, liberalization in Spanish colonial policies during the late 1850s heightened expectations that political and economic reforms were now a real possibility on the island. As a result, financial support disap-

12. Portell Vilá, *Narcisco López*, II, 111–112. See also José L. Alfonso to José A. Saco, New York, Oct. 20, 1850, Biblioteca Nacional José Martí, Colección Cubana (hereafter BNJM, CC), Colección manuscrito (hereafter C.M.) Alfonso, Leg. 29–33, no. 91. For additional information on the López expeditions see Robert G. Caldwell, *The López Expeditions to Cuba, 1848–1851* (Princeton, 1915).

13. Basil Rauch, *American Interest in Cuba, 1848–1855* (New York, 1974), chapter 10; C. Stanley Urban, "The Abortive Quitman Filibustering Expedition, 1852–1855," *The Journal of Mississippi History*, 18:3 (July 1956), 175–196. Despite Urban's understandable deduction that the New York junta was fully behind the filibustering expeditions, the following sources suggest that, in fact, the filibustering strategy was of secondary interest to a diplomatic settlement: J. L. O'Sullivan to E. Hernández, Betancourt, Goicouría, and F. de Armas, Sept. 7, 1852, BNJM, CC, C. M. Ponce, Leg. 2c, no. 17; Cirilo Villaverde to Juan M. Macías, June 8, 1853, BNJM, CC, C. M. Villaverde, no. 23; Villaverde to Macías, Aug. 8, 1853, BNJM, CC, C. M. Villaverde, no. 26.

peared and the movement lost much of its appeal to the emigré communities, destroying the separatist threat to Spanish authority.

This left the movement to a small group of militants who during the 1850s had been highly critical of the New York junta's program and who now, from 1865 to 1866, reorganized themselves as the Sociedad Republicana de Cuba y Puerto Rico. The primary leaders were sympathizers and former associates of Narciso López, who had died at the hands of the Spanish in 1851. They included Cirilo Villaverde, Juan Manuel Macías, and Plutarco González. During the 1850s, these men had been indistinguishable socioeconomically and ideologically from the liberal members of the New York junta, but they were deeply committed separatists who differed with the junta's strategies for evicting the Spanish. Based in New Orleans, they had insisted on immediate armed action to be initiated by dispatching filibustering expeditions against the island.[14] Because they were few in number and low on finances they had relied heavily on North American slave interests and mercenaries to launch the expeditions, giving them a deserved proslavery reputation. However, while they were clearly not out to implement emancipation during the 1850s, as liberals their primary motivation was annexation per se and not the preservation of slavery. Their views contrasted sharply with the more cautious group in New York, who feared the consequence of armed rebellion and hoped, as we have seen, for an outright sale of Cuba to the United States.

After López's death, Villaverde, Macías, and the others continued favoring an insurrectionary strategy over diplomacy and made it the foundation of the movement in the 1860s. The Sociedad Republicana and its mouthpiece, *La Voz de América*, developed an activist, insurrectionist separatism inspired by the boldness and militancy of López's filibustering activities 15 years before. Besides representing a rejection of diplomacy, this commitment to insurrection reflected a belief in Cuba's right to self-determination; that is, the right of Cubans to determine for themselves whether to be independent or part of the United States. It was this concept that allowed annexationists and advocates of independence to unite in the Sociedad Republicana. Within this self-determinist construct, annexationists seeking to promote insurrection in Cuba could join with the proindependence faction in defeating the Spanish, after which Cubans would decide their political destiny. Annexationists calling for armed rebellion sincerely believed that most Cubans desired some formal association with the United States, but they declared their readiness to accept

14. Raúl Roa, *Con la pluma y el machete*, 3 vols. (Havana, 1950), III, 164–165; *La Voz de América*, Sept. 20, 30, 1866. For an example of a Lopista program, see "Programa de Sánchez Iznaga," BNJM, CC, C. M. Ponce, Leg. 2c.

an independent nation should that be decided by the island's inhabitants through democratic procedure. The annexationists who took this position would not tolerate a diplomatically arranged sale of the island to the United States, which would bypass popular will.

These ideas had been expressed as early as the 1850s by many Cubans in exile. The annexationist Bellido de Luna brothers, for example, noted in *El Filibustero* that separatism's "first object is liberty attained through armed action . . . and the proclamation of Popular Sovereignty. Annexation to the United States is for us a delayed question, and we will discuss it only in theory as a probable end that will ensure the future security of Cuba's destiny." But, the article concluded, "the will of the people will determine the path to be taken."[15] Those promoting a diplomatic annexation—of whom there were few in the emigré centers after 1855—obviously had no legitimate role to play from this standpoint, whereas the two radically different conceptions of Cuba's future were subsumed within a movement whose highest priority was initiating a rebellion. Both groups could agree that after a successful insurrection, Cubans would then debate the issue of the island's political future.

The self-determinist concept was crucial for maintaining unity, since the growth of *independentismo* was substantial during the 1850s and 1860s. With the collapse of the previous separatist activism in 1855, several prominent exiles declared for independence, including Goicouría and Francisco Agüero Estrada, editor of the emigré newspaper, *El Pueblo*.[16] By the mid–1860s, for a number of reasons, many had followed their example.[17] Annexation was in direct contradiction to the growing nationalist sentiment taking place among Cubans throughout the 1850s and 1860s, most eloquently expressed in the political tracts of José Antonio Saco. Saco sought reformist solutions, and was tainted by the racist conception of Cuban nationality characteristic of most whites of the time, but he did state his preference for independence over annexation. The latter, he argued, would lead to the destruction of the island's Latin heritage and

15. *El Filibustero*, Feb. 15, 1854.

16. *El Eco de Cuba*, Dec. 10, 20, 1855, Jan. 1, 10, 1856; *El Pueblo*, June 19, 29, Aug. 15, 1855; and Guerra y Sánchez, *Manual*, p. 555.

17. The historical literature is replete with polemical debates regarding whether the Lopistas favored independence or annexation. Despite Portell Vilá's assertions to the contrary, López and his followers were no doubt annexationists from 1848 to 1851. Clearly, some of López's followers, particularly Villaverde and Macías, became *independentistas* by the mid-1850s, while others remained annexationists. All, however, believed in Cuban self-determination, and united in efforts to promote insurrection. See Vidal Morales y Morales, *Hombres del 68: Rafael Morales y González* (Havana, 1972), p. 191; Plutarco González, *The Cuban Question and American Policy, in Light of Common Sense* (New York, 1969); *La Voz de América*, June 21, 1866; and César García del Pino, "Pugna entre independentistas y anexo-reformistas antes de la Revolución de Yara," *Revista de la Biblioteca Nacional José Martí*, ser. 3, 17:3 (Sept.–Dec. 1975), 64–65.

dominance of political and social life by Anglo-Americans. Saco's arguments were increasingly accepted by Cubans.[18]

Annexation lost further support as a result of increasing disenchantment among Cubans over the low priority of their affairs in the conduct of United States foreign policy. Many who initially supported a diplomatic solution to the separatist question came to the conclusion, after several years, that the United States would never make sacrifices to gain Cuba. In other words, the United States would not risk complicating relations with Spain and Europe for the sake of acquiring the island. Given the negative North American attitude toward Cuban filibustering expeditions during the 1850s, separatists thought the United States was simply unwilling to damage its relations with Europe to attain the island.[19]

Finally, many annexations of the 1850s became disillusioned with the prodiplomacy separatist leadership, which they considered timid and personally unwilling to risk sacrificing wealth and position to fight the Spanish.[20] *La Voz de América* considered that separatism's major weakness during the 1850s had been its exclusive reliance on Cuba's socioeconomic elite (*clase oligarca*), whose primary concern was not separatism for its own sake, but separatism as a tool to advance their personal economic interests. When the movement was no longer useful to their interests, argued the newspaper, the elite withdrew and left the movement to die from its own inactivity.[21]

This suspicion of Cuba's established classes raised concern about the movement's socially exclusive nature as early as the 1850s. Betancourt Cisneros and others were criticized for promoting the interests of Cuba's wealthy rather than separatism. One critic in 1853 suggested that "it is important that the revolution be made 'by the Cuban people and for the Cuban people' . . . and to do this . . . it is important to remove the reins from the hands of a few *viejos ricos* and their faithful servants and leaders." *El Filibustero* argued that "illustrious men, the people, and the middle classes provide the lever of all revolutions." And another newspaper, *El Pueblo*, even declared in 1855 that, if necessary, slaves should be included in the separatist revolt, probably the first time that had been suggested by a member of Cuba's liberal elite.[22] This broader view of the insurgent constituency was incorporated into the separatism of the 1860s. The leaders of the Sociedad Republicana suggested that the rebel party

18. Fernando Ortiz, ed., *Contra la anexión. José Antonio Saco* (Havana, 1974).

19. *El Pueblo*, June 11, 1855.

20. Juan M. Macías to Plutarco González, Sept. 19, 1853, BNJM, CC, C. M. Anexión, no. 51. See also *El Filibustero*, *El Cometa*, and *El Pueblo* for the 1850s.

21. *La Voz de América*, July 31, Sept. 20, 1866

22. *El Eco de Cuba*, Nov. 10, 1855; *El Filibustero*, Nov. 25, 1853; *El Pueblo*, July 20, 1855; and *El Cometa*, July 1, 1855.

look to the Cuban people of all classes and races. "La Sociedad Republicana has recognized the error [of relying on the *clase oligarca*]," noted *La Voz de América*, "and has tried and succeeded in raising the spirit of the PEOPLE, and has finally ensured that the REVOLUTION no longer represents the egotistical aspirations of the aristocratic slaveholders [*esclavócratas*], but is an ostensible manifestation of the desires of the PEOPLE in general." The revolution had to be broad based, and required the incorporation of the "ignorant, the peasant, the cigarmaker, the freedman, the slave, the real PEOPLE," not just the rich and literate.[23] This represented a radical change in attitude regarding which social classes were now responsible for separating Cuba from Spanish domination.

Of particular concern to established interests in Cuba was the call by *La Voz de América* for the inclusion of slaves in the separatist constituency. Before the 1860s, few had seriously considered such a stragegy, but many now believed that the mass of slaves could provide the numbers necessary to defeat the Spanish militarily. The U.S. Civil War had demonstrated that disruption did not lead inevitably to slave uprisings. Indeed, slaves and free men of color provided help when given the opportunity. This was an important psychological breakthrough that opened the door for a more radical conception of the separatist movement. As one emigré activist wrote soon after the outbreak of the Ten Years War, "In addition to the incompatibility of slavery with our revolution, it is of absolute necessity to make soldiers of the blacks."[24]

Advocacy of this position naturally required a different attitude toward slavery itself. During the 1850s, as seen, the movement did not represent a threat to slavery, and in fact abolitionism was not the subject of much discussion until 1854. Concerned that the separatist junta's program and tactics had given the movement a reactionary and proslavery reputation, that year a group of exiles led by Carlos Collins, Lorenzo Alló, and Juan C. Zenea, demanded that the movement discuss abolition publicly and make its position clear. A newspaper, *El Mulato*, was founded in New York to "attack slavery in whatever way it is disguised, . . . because we consider it incompatible with legitimate and real freedom." The dissidents' solution was the traditional liberal approach of gradual, indemnified emancipation, although they demanded a more forthright advocacy.[25] By the 1860s, the emigré leaders understood that this hesitant abolitionism still was not calculated to attract the support of slaves or even free men of color. More-

23. *La Voz de América*, Sept. 20, 1866.

24. Morales y Morales, *Hombres del 68*, pp. 191–192.

25. See *El Mulato*, Feb. 20, 1854 and Alló, *La esclavitud doméstica*. Emigrés were not unanimous in their desire to discuss publicly the issue of emancipation. For a negative response to this abolitionist propaganda, see *El Filibustero*, Feb. 15, 1854.

over, *La Voz de América* pointed out that abolition in the United States had doomed the institution everywhere and that efforts to extend its life even under a gradual emancipation plan would serve only to promote slave unrest and disenchantment with abolitionist leaders. Therefore, the New York leadership took an uncompromising position in support of immediate abolition of slavery, the first group of political significance in Cuban history to do so. Indeed, emigrés came to believe that "the act of emancipation of the blacks will be the Cuban people's ticket to liberty."[26]

In addition to advocating a broadening of the insurrectionist base through courting the people and abolishing slavery, the Sociedad Republicana called on the separatist community to abandon its traditional reliance on the initiative of foreign interests (i.e., the United States) and of the exiles themselves to bring about the insurrection—an argument also made by critics of the New York junta during the 1850s. López's expeditions had been financed and manned by North Americans, and expeditionary organizing from 1852 to 1855 had been placed in the hands of Quitman. In both cases, Cuban independence of action had been compromised. But *La Voz* raised an even more fundamental concern: it questioned the entire idea that the landing of an expeditionary force on Cuban soil would by itself incite a rebellion. The separatist movement had never succeeded in mobilizing popular support in Cuba, and López's fate suggested what they could expect without that backing. Having now proclaimed the rebellion as the responsibility of the masses, the Sociedad Republicana also rejected the separatist filibustering tradition in favor of a popular domestic political movement capable of launching the revolt internally. *La Voz* noted that the idea that an expedition from abroad was essential to spark the rebellion "is a thought that kills the spirit of initiative, [that] retards action."[27] The exile propagandists also called on tobacco workers in Cuba to organize against Spanish authority. When the *lectura* in the factories was prohibited in 1866 because of its "subversive" nature, the newspaper encouraged the workers to resist. "No," it declared, "obedience in this case is humiliation; . . . you have the right of insurrection."[28] The impact of emigré propaganda in this regard is unknown, but in October 1868, separatists on the island launched the insurrection called for in New York.

The Ten Years War was the first significant armed revolt against Spanish authority in Cuba. In April 1869, at Guaímaro, Cuban rebel factions wrote a constitution, established a provisional government, and seem-

26. *La Voz de América*, Mar. 10, Apr. 11, June 21, and Sept. 30, 1866.

27. *La Voz de América*, Aug. 20, 1866.

28. Ramiro Guerra y Sánchez et al., eds., *Historia de la nación cubana*, 10 vols. (Havana, 1952), VII, 251; *La Voz de América*, Aug. 10, 1866.

ingly joined in a united struggle against Spanish authority. The rebellion gained widespread support on the island, but ultimately it failed because of its inability to revolutionize western Cuba—a failure to a large extent caused by insurgent disunity. The emigré centers played a particularly controversial role. While Cuban *mambises* struggled to keep the revolt alive with the barest essentials of warfare, Cubans in exile engaged in bitter polemics and succumbed to political factionalization. They were unanimous in their rejection of Spanish rule, but once the initial revolutionary euphoria receded and discussion about strategy and the ultimate destiny of the island began, the fragility of the movement became evident.

The movement was now clearly abolitionist, both in Cuba itself and in the exile centers, but it had not yet been defined politically. Cuban historians of the independence movement have generally characterized the Ten Years War as *independentista*. The clear annexationist declarations by various rebel figures are dismissed as motivated by short-term strategic considerations that were quickly abandoned, but a close look at the emigré centers reveals that the political question was of central concern, at least to exiles.[29] Unity based on self-determinism, and not a clearly stated proindependence or annexationist position, was no longer tenable once the insurrection had erupted, for rebel strategy was now dependent on whether Cubans desired an independent republic or annexation to the United States.

During the first year of the conflict, an influx of exiles to the United States altered considerably the emigré leadership and produced a revival of annexationist sentiment. Most of the new arrivals who became influential in separatist circles in New York were merchants, professionals, and intellectuals committed to separatism; the abolition of slavery; and liberal political and socioeconomic ideals. Some had been active separatists during the 1850s, and virtually all had backed the abortive reformist movement of the 1860s that had sought greater autonomy for Cuba within a framework of Spanish rule. The most prominent were José Morales Lemus, José Antonio Echeverría, and Manuel M. Mestre. Even the few slaveholders among them, such as Domingo and Miguel de Aldama, had

29. The political ideals of the members of the New York junta during the 1870s have been the subject of dispute. Studies either glorify them as patriots for their incessant proindependence diplomatic activities as representatives of the Cuban republic-in-arms in the United States, or vilify them as covert reformists interested in conserving their slave interests. Laudatory treatments include Portell Vilá's *Historia de Cuba*, 4 vols. (Havana, 1938–1941), II; Enrique Piñeyro, *Morales Lemus y la revolución de Cuba* (New York, 1871); Félix Lizaso, "José Morales Lemus y su gestión diplomática en los Estados Unidos," *Revista Cubana*, 1:1 (Jan.–June 1968), 143–155; and Ramiro Guerra y Sánchez, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 2 vols. (Havana, 1972), I, 370–384. The literature that condemns the junta as in essence proslavery bases its interpretations on Cepero Bonilla's *Azúcar y abolición*.

concluded that slavery was anachronistic and had to be dismantled. The latter were willing to trade slavery for annexation, while others could welcome annexation without any regrets over slavery.[30]

It was indeed the annexationist inclinations of the Cuban insurgent government during late 1868 and 1869—as well as the clear failure of reformism—that attracted Morales Lemus and the others to the rebellion. Under the authority of the government-in-arms, Morales Lemus established an emigré junta in New York, which he used to revive the separatist program of the 1850s: annexation through diplomacy. He quickly came to an agreement with U.S. Secretary of State Hamilton Fish. The United States would seek Cuban independence by guaranteeing Cuban indemnity payments to Spain. This was considered politically advantageous by annexationists who hoped to avoid a long, drawn-out conflict that most believed Cubans could not win in any case. In one form or another, this was the basic goal of the New York junta throughout the Ten Years War.[31]

To the junta's critics, however, this was simply a way to mortgage Cuba's independence and ensure eventual annexation. Opposition to the junta formed in New York during 1869, and was led by the old-line leaders of the former Sociedad Republicana. They were joined in their opposition to the junta during the next two years by a number of post-1868 exiles (such as Carlos and José Gabriel del Castillo, Miguel Bravo y Sentéis, José J. Govantes, and José de Armas y Céspedes) similar in socioeconomic origin to the junta's leaders. While the junta's opponents were by no means united on all issues, they seemed to agree on a nationalist conception of the struggle: absolute independence. As far as these critics were concerned, separation from Spain under any agreement which left Cuba

30. A list of these exiles is included in Morales y Morales, *Hombres del 68*, and Casasús, *La emigración cubana*, p. 94. Information on their socioeconomic background is available in Cuba, Gobierno y Capitanía General, *Datos y noticias oficiales referentes a los bienes mandados embargar en la isla de Cuba por disposición del gobierno superior político* (Havana, 1870); José Miguel Macías, *Deportados políticos a Fernando Poo. Expresión de profesiones, edad, naturalidad y fecha de prisión, fuga y fallecimiento* (New York, 1882); "Libro índice de cubanos residentes en Nueva York—Documentos procedentes de la Junta Revolucionaria de New York, 1868–1878," Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Donativos y Remisiones, Leg. 40, no. 54. While the junta's members approached abolition with caution—as did the rebel leadership in Cuba—their abolitionism was clear. See *La Revolución* (New York), July 4, 1870. For attitudes in Cuba about abolition, see Rebecca J. Scott, "Gradual Abolition and the Dynamics of Slave Emancipation in Cuba, 1868–86," *HAHR*, 63:3 (Aug. 1983), 450–456.

31. For evidence of the junta's annexationist sentiments, see *La Revolución*, 1869–1870; Eladio Aguilera Rojas, *Francisco Vicente Aguilera y la revolución de Cuba*, 2 vols. (Havana, 1909), I, 134; Morales y Morales, *Hombres del 68*, p. 102; José Ignacio Rodríguez, *La vida del Dr. José Manuel Mestre* (Havana, 1909), pp. 96–97, 125–127, 157; Piñeyro, *Morales Lemus y la revolución de Cuba*, pp. 83–84; Juan Arnao, *Páginas para la historia de la isla de Cuba* (Havana, 1900), p. 235; and Allan Nevins, *Hamilton Fish: The Inner History of the Grant Administration*, 2 vols. (New York, 1957), I, 241.

morally or financially beholden to the United States was a first step toward annexation. They thus opposed all diplomatic negotiations with Spain, called for unconditional war led by military leaders willing to take whatever destructive measures were necessary to defeat the Spanish, and did all they could to influence the insurgent government in that direction.[32]

Despite the prominence of annexationists in the rebel government-in-arms virtually throughout the conflict, proindependence separatists, for the first time, took an uncompromising and public stand in defense of their position. Not only did they abandon their traditional tolerance of annexationism, but they explicitly redefined it as a negation of Cuban nationalism. As far as they were concerned, the separatist movement, in effect, became the independence movement. The junta's critics recognized that their attacks on the insurgent government's diplomatically oriented policies damaged the war effort, but most appeared to prefer a return to Spanish rule rather than to emerge from the war as part of the United States.

As early as May 1869, the local emigré newspaper in New Orleans, *La Libertad*, openly challenged annexationist thinking.[33] And by the next year, *independentistas* had formed their own emigré organization, the Sociedad de Artesanos Cubanos de New York, to counteract the junta's influence in the communities. The Sociedad de Artesanos explicitly defined its proindependence sentiments: "Questions and activities that are not based on the idea of unconditional independence, are contrary to the objectives and goals of this society." The society even demanded political segregation between independents and annexationists. "The independent character of the society," stated article three of the charter, "precludes any fusion, acceptance or union with any other association whose political creed is annexationist, concessionist, or reformist; that is to say, that does not assume the same principle as independence."[34] By 1875, the pro-

32. For examples of criticisms of the junta's policies, see the following: José Valdés Fauly, *La Junta Central de Cuba y Puerto Rico, establecida en esta ciudad, ejerciendo facultades dictatoriales que no se sabe como, ni cuando, se le han conferido* (New York, Apr. 16, 1869); Cirilo Villaverde, "La revolución de Cuba vista desde New York" (New York, 1869), reprinted in Comisión Nacional Cubana de la UNESCO, *Cuba en la UNESCO: Homenaje a Cirilo Villaverde* (Havana, 1964); José de Armas y Céspedes, *Discurso pronunciado por José de Armas y Céspedes* (New Orleans, 1870); Juan Bellido de Luna, *Cuestión individual* (New York, 1870); Ricardo Estevan, *Revista general de la situación de Cuba en los cinco años de guerra* (New York, 1872); Carlos del Castillo, *Carta . . . al Director de 'La Independencia' de New York respondiendo a su artículo editorial del 28 de agosto de 1874, titulado 'Digamos algo sobre nuestros asuntos'* (London, 1870). See also New York newspapers hostile to the junta: *El Demócrata*, *La Independencia*, *La Voz de la Patria*, and *El Correo de Nueva York*.

33. *La Libertad* (New Orleans), May 12, June 20, Aug. 1, 1869. See also La Propaganda Política, *A los habitantes de Cuba: La anexión no:—La independencia!* (New Orleans, 1870).

34. *El Demócrata*, Sept. 9, 21, Oct. 26, Nov. 1, 2, 1870.

independence ideal was firmly planted in the emigré communities. In fact, during the next year, one prominent New York newspaper, *La Voz de la Patria,* declared an even broader program of autonomous national (and supranational) development for the Caribbean and Latin America generally. It called for "the creation of an international power through a confederation of the Antilles" capable of containing North American annexationist interests.[35] This program represented the culmination of the communities' transition from support for an undefined self-determinist separatism during the 1860s to a militant call for unconditional independence to be achieved through a self-reliant insurrection. By the end of the Ten Years War, annexationism and the leaders of the New York junta had been thoroughly discredited, leaving separatism in the hands of *independentistas.*

Annexation, nevertheless, remained a threat during the next two decades, particularly after 1888, when it became the subject of considerable public debate in the United States and emigré press. The threat, however, did not originate with the emigré separatist movement. While a few Cuban annexationists—most prominently, Juan Bellido de Luna—remained active in the emigré centers, the vast majority of Cubans in the United States were uncompromising in their demand for independence.[36] The primary challenge to the island's potential sovereignty emanated from North American interests, and from Cuban landowners, planters, and professionals who hoped for some kind of association with the United States. Only when many of these Cubans emigrated to the United States after the outbreak of the independence war in 1895 did annexationism again gain a foothold in the emigré communities.[37]

La Voz de la Patria's fear of an expansionist United States became a central concern of many exiles, particularly a young Cuban writer and orator, José Martí, whose eloquence was to establish him as the most influential exponent of Cuban nationalism during the late 1880s. Martí was forceful and blunt in his warnings that Cuba's independence faced grave danger at the hands of North American interests: "The time has surely arrived, for this country [United States], encouraged by protectionism, to unleash its latent aggression, and since it does not dare fix its sights on Mexico nor Canada, it fixes its sights on the Pacific Islands and the Antilles,

35. *La Voz de la Patria,* Oct. 10, 1876.

36. After 1875, virtually the entire emigré press was adamantly proindependence. For details of Bellido's annexationism see Juan Bellido de Luna and Enrique Trujillo, eds., *La anexión de Cuba a los Estados Unidos. Artículos publicados en 'El Porvenir'* (New York, 1892). Bellido was strongly attacked by the emigré press for his annexationism.

37. The activities of the emigré junta in New York after 1895 are detailed in Louis A. Pérez, Jr., *Cuba Between Empires, 1878–1902* (Pittsburgh, 1983), pp. 7, 122.

on us."[38] Martí's writings and oratory, with their sense of alarm regarding North American intentions toward Cuba, would inject a new urgency into the separatist movement's organizing activities during the final years of the 1880s.

In the meantime, as the 1870s drew to a close, Cuban emigré thought could be characterized as highly nationalistic, abolitionist, and dedicated to obtaining independence through a broad-based, self-reliant insurrectionary struggle. The defeat of diplomatic annexationism, however, had been costly. Bitter exile divisions prevented effective material support to the insurrection, and in 1878 the Cuban provisional government-in-arms signed the Zanjón Pact, ending the conflict with only promises of political and socioeconomic reform from Spanish officials. Most of the primary emigré leaders—annexationist as well as *independentista*—accepted the inevitable and returned to Cuba. Many withdrew from political life, while others joined a new reformist movement intent on gaining Cuban autonomy within the Spanish empire.

Promises of reform did not impress those who remained in exile: a new generation of activists schooled in the ideas of the old Sociedad Republicana of the 1860s. Political heirs of the antijunta factions of the Ten Years War, they included New York and Key West leaders José Francisco Lamadriz, José Dolores Poyo, Juan Arnao, and Ramón Rubiera, and war veterans Fernando Figueredo, José Rogelio Castillo, and José Párraga. Their rebel experiences had persuaded them to reject diplomacy outright and embrace a militarily directed filibustering strategy. In fact, they explicitly argued against the establishment of any civilian-dominated governmental body prior to the end of the conflict. The legalisms involved in operating a constitutional provisional government during the war had been, in their view, a major obstacle to the military conduct of the rebellion. As a result, during 1879–86, these leaders placed community resources at the disposal of prominent officers of the past war—Calixto García, Ramón Bonachea, Máximo Gómez, and Antonio Maceo—who organized filibustering activities.[39]

38. José Martí, *Obras completas*, 28 vols. (Havana, 1963–1973), II, 48–49. The classic study on Martí's anti-imperialism is Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring, *Martí anti-imperialista* (Havana, 1967). For a clearer understanding of Martí historiography see John M. Kirk, *José Martí: Mentor of the Cuban Nation* (Gainesville, 1983), pp. 3–18, and Carlos Ripoll, *José Martí, the United States, and the Marxist Interpretation of Cuban History* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1984).

39. *La República* (New York), June 20, 1885. For an example of the centralized organizational structure, see Máximo Gómez's 1884 program in Ramón Infiesta, *Máximo Gómez* (Havana, 1937), pp. 221–223. The filibustering strategy is evident in emigré activities from 1878 to 1886. For an overview, see Gerald E. Poyo, "Cuban Patriots in Key West, 1878–1886: Guardians at the Separatist Ideal," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 61:1 (July 1982), 20–36.

After the failed *Guerra Chiquita*—a last desperate effort to revitalize the Ten Years War during 1879–80—the primary focus of emigré organizing shifted from New York to the Florida communities, where the commitment to filibustering was strong. Despite an initially enthusiastic response by the New York community for the new rebel activities, the movement's seeming lack of political sophistication and of concern for democratic procedure alienated an important sector of that community led by José Martí and a prominent journalist, Enrique Trujillo. While Martí initially supported Gómez and Maceo, he soon withdrew his support, questioning the movement's militaristic and filibustering character. Martí understood the importance of the military leaders, but he was convinced that any insurrection had to be domestically incited, democratically inspired, and supported by a firm popular constituency. In effect, he replaced Villaverde as the primary exponent of a broad-based, internally launched rebellion.[40] Martí alienated the Florida communities, but he was vindicated in 1886, when Gómez and Maceo admitted failure and ended their expeditionary activities. Indeed, recognizing the fallacy of the filibustering strategy, the Key West leaders in 1889 reorganized their center and established a secret organization, La Convención Cubana, to promote the foundation of rebel cells on the island. They explicitly rejected the filibustering tradition, thus setting the stage for a reconciliation with the New York community in 1892.[41]

Conflicts among emigrés, however, had a broader dimension than is revealed by historians' almost exclusive concern with the Martí-Gómez dispute. Recent research demonstrates that social conflicts within the communities represented an equal, if not greater, threat to unity within the separatist movement.[42] By the 1880s, as the rebel constituency broadened, social conflicts forced a rethinking of the movement's basic socioeconomic assumptions.

Separatism was deeply influenced by changes in emigré demographic trends after 1870. Prior to that time, Cubans in the United States were

40. The conflicts between Martí and Gómez during the mid-1880s are well documented in a variety of studies. See Jorge Mañach, *José Martí: Apostle of Freedom*, Coley Taylor, trans. (New York, 1950); Félix Lizaso, *Martí: Martyr of Cuban Independence*, Esther E. Shuler, trans. (Albuquerque, 1953); and Jorge Ibarra, *José Martí: Dirigente político e ideólogo revolucionario* (Havana, 1980).

41. See La Convención Cubana's charter in Raoul Alpízar Poyo, *Cayo Hueso y José Dolores Poyo: Dos símbolos patrios* (Havana, 1947), pp. 74–78.

42. Traditional treatments of the emigré communities by Casasús, Castellanos, and Rivero Muñiz leave the distinct impression that Cubans thought only about separatist concerns. More recent studies reveal deep social divisions. For an overview of the demographics, social composition, and conflicts within the communities, see Gerald E. Poyo, "Cuban Communities in the United States: Toward an Overview of the 19th Century Experience," in *Cubans in the United States: Proceedings from the Seminar on Cuban American Studies*, Miren Uriarte-Gastón and Jorge Cañas Martínez, eds. (Boston, 1984).

primarily white and of middle-to-upper-class origins, but with the outbreak of the Ten Years War and the foundation in the 1870s of a dynamic cigar industry in Key West, Florida that benefited from a United States protective tariff on cigar imports, immigration from Cuba began to reflect more accurately the island's socioeconomic mix. For the first time, immigration from Cuba to the United States was multiracial and heavily working class. A similar immigrant influx continued during the 1880s as another cigar center opened in Tampa and Cuba entered a period of economic difficulty. The rebellion had weakened Cuba's sugar economy. Destruction of sugar plantations led to a reduction of exports and loss of markets, which went to producers in Hawaii, Louisiana, and Europe. With these troubles compounded by decreasing sugar prices during the mid-1880s, Cuba fell into a depression through much of the decade. Caught in the general economic decline, and affected by the growing industry of Florida, Cuban cigar factories closed, unemployment increased dramatically, and immigration to the United States increased through the remainder of the century.[43]

Key West's social composition was characteristic of the changed nature of the emigré centers. In 1880, its Cuban population of some 2,000 was at least 80 percent working class and 21 percent black and mulatto. Within five years, the community had 5,500 Cubans of similar social backgrounds.[44] These working-class emigrés had first established their credibility as a significant separatist constituency during the 1870s, and they emerged as the movement's primary political and financial base during the following decade.[45]

Despite the communities' commitment to nationalism, class and racial tensions tested the cohesiveness of the emigré centers. During the 1870s, few Cubans in Florida were economically prominent, but as the cigar industry grew, Cuban entrepreneurs prospered. A new class of economically successful Cubans gained influence within the separatist movement in Florida. At the same time, a powerful labor movement appeared in response to the social ills associated with rapid industrial growth. Throughout the 1870s and 1880s, working-class leaders with a social

43. The best treatment of political and socioeconomic developments in Cuba during the 1880s is chapter 1 of Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*. See also his "Vagrants, Beggars, and Bandits: Social Origins of Cuban Separatism, 1878–1895," *The American Historical Review*, 90:5 (Dec. 1985), 1092–1121.

44. Manuscript census returns, Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Monroe County, Florida, Population schedule, National Archives Microfilm Series T-9, roll 131 and Manuscript census returns, Florida State Census of 1885, Monroe County, National Archives Microfilm Series M845, roll 890.

45. For details of separatist activities in Key West during the Ten Years War, see Gerald E. Poyo, "Key West and the Cuban Ten Years War," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 57:3 (Jan. 1979), 289–307.

activist tradition competed with the Key's political leaders for the community's attention. The most prominent included Ramón Rivero, Enrique Messonier, Enrique Creci, Carlos Baliño, Guillermo Sorondo, and Francisco Segura. They were successful in organizing the workers in defense of their economic interests and in placing a socioeconomic agenda before the separatist community.

Class polarization was further complicated by race. During the 1870s, few blacks were prominent as separatist leaders in exile, but during the following decade they emerged as influential representatives of well-established black communities with their own institutions and traditions. These blacks included Carlos Borrego, Guillermo Sorondo, Joaquín Granado, Cornelio Brito, and Francisco Segura in Florida, and Martín Morúa Delgado and Rafael Serra in New York. While these leaders were committed to an independent Cuba, many became disillusioned over local conditions. Blacks suffered discrimination in the cigar factories, and as the Cuban community in Florida integrated into the broader society, black working-class Cubans often found themselves at odds with their white compatriots over local economic and political matters. Moreover, black Cubans recognized that any effort they made to achieve prominence within the separatist movement was viewed with suspicion by their white counterparts. As a result of these social developments, many black and other working-class Cubans in Florida withdrew from separatist activism during the 1870s and 1880s to promote social militancy.[46]

This social polarization within the emigré communities inevitably influenced separatist thought. Confronted with difficult class and race problems, labor and negro leaders began to question the movement's exclusive political focus. During the 1850s and 1860s, separatism's fundamental socioeconomic vision was that of liberalism, and not since the debates over abolition had social issues figured prominently in the movement's agenda. Now engaged in social struggles, working-class leaders in the Cuban centers rejected liberal principles in favor of radical alternatives. Particularly appealing to workers during the 1880s was anarchism, an ideology that

46. This and other socioeconomic information on Cubans in the United States is detailed in the following sources: Gerald E. Poyo, "Cuban Emigré Communities in the United States and the Independence of their Homeland, 1852–1895" (Ph.D. diss., University of Florida, 1983); L. Glenn Westfall, "Don Vicente Martínez Ybor, the Man and His Empire: The Development of the Clear Havana Industry in Cuba and Florida in the Nineteenth Century" (Ph.D. diss., University of Florida, 1977) and *Key West: Cigar City U.S.A.* (Key West, 1984); Joan Marie Steffy, "The Cuban Immigrants of Tampa, Florida: 1886–1898" (M.A. thesis, University of South Florida, 1975); "A Centennial History of Ybor City," *Tampa Bay History*, 7:2 (Fall/Winter 1985, Special issue); and Lisandro Pérez, "The Rise and Decline of the Cuban Community in Ybor City, Florida, 1886–1930," unpublished paper, 1983 and "The Cuban Community of New York in the Nineteenth Century," unpublished paper, 1985.

had assumed considerable prominence in Cuba's labor movement. Anarchist leaders from Havana routinely visited Key West and Tampa, as did many Italian radicals from New York. Anarchists challenged directly the nationalist cause and called on labor to work for social and not political revolution. Many workers were no longer willing to put aside their socioeconomic grievances for the benefit of a promised insurrection that never seemed to come. Debates between anarchist and nationalist leaders raged in the communities as the 1880s drew to a close, leaving the separatist movement in disarray, and virtually abandoned by the mass of the working-class constituency in Florida. They remained loyal to the independence ideal, but were no longer willing to divert organizing from the social movement toward the nationalist cause.[47]

Despite separatism's serious divisions, by the early 1890s deteriorating political and social conditions in Cuba encouraged the traditional political leaders to make a determined effort to seek compromise and unity in the communities. Reorganizing activities had proceeded independently in each community from 1888 to 1890, but during the next two years Martí took the lead, establishing a unified revolutionary party, the Partido Revolucionario Cubano (PRC), and initiating the task of reformulating a separatist ideology capable of attracting Florida's working-class communities.

The establishment of the PRC in early 1892 represented a compromise between the New York and Florida political leadership. On the one hand, the PRC's charter called for a domestically incited rebellion in Cuba based on a broad constituency. This reflected Martí's concerns during the 1880s that a filibustering strategy directed by a few military veterans could never promote an effective rebel program. On the other hand, while the PRC was democratic at the grass-roots level (local emigré associations and clubs), it was centralized and authoritarian at its highest levels. This was important to the Florida leaders and military veterans of the Ten Years War, whose experience had taught them that insurrectionary conspiracies and struggles had to be centrally controlled to be effective.[48]

The compromise was impressive, given the deep animosity the Florida leaders felt toward Martí, but was not by itself sufficient to ensure widespread support for the PRC within the emigré communities. Martí realized that to attract the mass of the socially disenchanted emigré work-

47. Anarchists' attitudes toward the separatist movement are revealed in the Havana newspaper, *El Productor*, 1887–1891. See also Aleida Plasencia, ed., *Enrique Roig de San Martín: Artículos publicados en el periódico 'El Productor'* (Havana, 1967); Olga Cabrera, "Enrique Creci: Un patriota obrero," *Santiago*, 36 (Dec. 1979), 121–150; and Ariel Hidalgo, *Orígenes del movimiento obrero y del pensamiento socialista en Cuba* (Havana 1976).

48. The process of political compromise and unity is included in Ibarra, *José Martí*, pp. 106–107.

ing class, the newly created political structures would have to be accompanied by a popular message. He had proposed a separatist program based on a multiclass and multiracial constituency in 1887, but it was not until late 1891 that he initiated the task of publicly defining the movement's ideological foundation.[49]

Martí's speeches in Florida and writings in his newspaper, *Patria*, revealed a sincerity and sensitivity to the concerns of workers and blacks traditionally absent in separatist thinking. "Let us close the way to a republic which is not prepared through methods worthy of man's dignity to promote the welfare and prosperity of all Cubans," he noted. "Let us place around the star, of the new flag, this formula of triumphant love: 'with all, and for the benefit of all.'"[50] In calling for a movement that served the interests of all Cubans, Martí implicitly rejected the traditional liberal ideology that rarely, if ever, spoke to the concerns of working-class Cubans.

Martí's frequent attention to labor issues and condemnation of social injustice and racism caught the attention of Florida's tobacco workers. He called on employers to treat their workers fairly and with dignity, and encouraged laborers to organize in defense of their interests. At the same time, he rejected the idea of the inevitability of class struggle promoted by labor radicals, thus gaining the backing of the traditional middle-class elements within the movement who appreciated his interest in neutralizing the influence of the exclusively labor-oriented anarchist organizations.[51]

Martí never offered specific policy formulations as to how social justice might be accomplished in the future republic, but workers were apparently not concerned by this. They no doubt believed that Martí would deal with the matter in due time. Workers extended support to the PRC on the basis of its grass-roots democratic structure and Martí's popular nationalist philosophy that emphasized worker participation, social justice, and racial equality. And indeed, workers joined the organization in large numbers and occupied prominent positions within its structure.[52]

Martí's popular nationalist movement of the 1890s represented a radical change from the diplomatic annexationism of midcentury led by Cuba's es-

49. Martí, *Obras completas*, I, 216–222, 253–256.

50. Martí, *Obras completas*, IV, 270–271, 279.

51. For an overview of Martí's socioeconomic thought see Kirk, *José Martí: Mentor of the Cuban Nation*, pp. 65–86, 106–131, and José Cantón Navarro, *Algunas ideas de José Martí en relación con la clase obrera y el socialismo* (Havana, 1970). See also Gerald E. Poyo, "José Martí: Architect of Social Unity. Class Tensions in the Cuban Emigré Communities of the United States, 1887–1895" (Gainesville, 1984). While the traditional literature on Martí emphasizes his success in uniting politically the New York and Florida centers, this occasional paper focuses on the process of social unity.

52. For details of workers' reaction to Martí and the PRC, see Poyo, "Cuban Emigré Communities and the Independence of Their Homeland," pp. 319–349.

tablished classes. More than one historian has noted that, throughout its history, Cuban separatism was plagued by an inability to offer a united front against Spanish authority; a problem that hampered all pragmatic efforts to achieve separatist goals. This was indeed the case in the emigré centers. Conflicts between Lopistas and the New York junta during the late 1840s and 1850s; bitter dissensions between the New York junta and its *independentista* critics during the Ten Years War; disagreements between Martí and the Florida veteran leadership during the 1880s; and disturbances between labor and nationalist activists during the same period all contributed to the ineffectiveness of separatist activism. While some have speculated that personal jealousies, animosities, and ambitions were central to the emigré divisions, it is apparent that more fundamental to these conflicts were very real political and social issues. The continual numerical increase and socioeconomic broadening of the separatist constituency throughout the second half of the century forced constant, and often difficult, adjustments. The essentially liberal movement of the 1840s and 1850s clearly did not threaten most established Cuban interests, including slaveholders, but the withdrawal of its most conservative elements after 1855 opened the movement to change. Within a decade, the movement advocated abolition of slavery, political self-determination, and self-reliant rebellion. This was followed by an intensification in nationalist sentiment during the Ten Years War, as a reaction against efforts to reintroduce annexation as the movement's political definition. No longer tolerant of annexationism, *independentistas* throughout the war forcefully advanced their own vision of Cuba's future.

By 1878, emigré separatism had embraced absolute independence, and during the next decade and a half it took an aggressive posture in defiance of North American annexationist interests. Finally, with the influx of significant numbers of Cuban workers and blacks into the emigré communities during the 1870s and 1880s, separatism was forced to focus on socioeconomic issues. The classical liberalism implicit in separatist thinking through 1880 was no longer satisfactory to these new constituencies that, in fact, represented a majority of emigré Cubans. Increasingly exposed to radical movements with visionary ideals, Cuban workers and blacks demanded greater participation in the formulation of separatist ideology. After substantial class and racial conflict throughout the 1880s isolated the traditional political leaders from their working-class constituency, separatism again succeeded in accommodating the ideas of a new constituency and achieved the political and social unity it had sought since the 1850s.

Inspired by emigré activities, disappointed over the lack of reforms promised by Spain since 1878, and battered by economic recession,

Cubans on the island organized and rose in response to the PRC's call for rebellion in February 1895. Emigré separatism had accomplished its goal of launching the war, but in so doing unleashed a new political dynamic that again threatened political and social unity. After Martí's death on a Cuban battlefield, exiles of the elite classes, who arrived in New York subsequent to the outbreak of the war, exerted a conservative influence on the PRC.[53] Just as had happened earlier during the Ten Years War, the new exiles preferred a diplomatic solution to the conflict. Moreover, most of these new emigrés ignored Martí's popular separatist vision, and some were even annexationists. Debates were inevitable, but Martí's residual moral influence in the communities was sufficient to maintain expatriate support for even a more conservative PRC. Nevertheless, without challenging the PRC's political authority in exile, emigré leaders in Florida and New York committed to the popular ideals promoted by Martí continually reminded Cubans of the movement's social ideology.[54] The war did not end with the independence and just society most emigrés had envisioned, but the evolution of exile thought had culminated in a popular nationalist ideology that served as inspiration for future generations in their quest to understand and define Cuban nationhood.

53. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, pp. 110–116, 122, 128–135.

54. See the following newspapers: *La Doctrina de Martí* (New York), *El Vigía* (Key West), *El Intransigente* (Key West), and *Oriente* (Tampa). Many of these were openly labor newspapers, but they fervently backed the separatist movement and promoted Martí's vision of the separatist cause.