

Caliban and Other Essays

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Caliban:
Notes Toward a Discussion of
Culture in Our America

A Question

A European journalist, and moreover a leftist, asked me a few days ago, "Does a Latin-American culture exist?" We were discussing, naturally enough, the recent polemic regarding Cuba that ended by confronting, on the one hand, certain bourgeois European intellectuals (or aspirants to that state) with a visible colonialist nostalgia; and on the other, that body of Latin-American writers and artists who reject open or veiled forms of cultural and political colonialism. The question seemed to me to reveal one of the roots of the polemic and, hence, could also be expressed another way: "Do you exist?" For to question our culture is to question our very existence, our human reality itself, and thus to be willing to take a stand in favor of our irremediable colonial condition, since it suggests that we would be but a distorted echo of what occurs elsewhere. This elsewhere is of course the metropolis, the colonizing centers, whose "right wings" have exploited us and whose supposed "left wings" have pretended and continue to pretend to guide us with pious solicitude—in both cases with the assistance of local intermediaries of varying persuasions.

While this fate is to some extent suffered by all countries emerging from colonialism—those countries of ours that enterprising metropolitan intellectuals have ineptly and successively termed *barbarians*, *peoples of color*, *underdevel-*

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opened countries, *Third World*—I think the phenomenon achieves a singular crudeness with respect to what Martí called “our *mestizo* America.” Although the thesis that every man and even every culture is *mestizo* could easily be defended and although this seems especially valid in the case of colonies, it is nevertheless apparent that in both their ethnic and their cultural aspects capitalist countries long ago achieved a relative homogeneity. Almost before our eyes certain readjustments have been made. The white population of the United States (diverse, but of common European origin) exterminated the aboriginal population and thrust the black population aside, thereby affording itself homogeneity in spite of diversity and offering a coherent model that its Nazi disciples attempted to apply even to other European conglomerates—an unforgivable sin that led some members of the bourgeoisie to stigmatize in Hitler what they applauded as a healthy Sunday diversion in westerns and Tarzan films. Those movies proposed to the world—and even to those of us who are kin to the communities under attack and who rejoiced in the evocation of our own extermination—the monstrous racial criteria that have accompanied the United States from its beginnings to the genocide in Indochina. Less apparent (and in some cases perhaps less cruel) is the process by which other capitalist countries have also achieved relative racial and cultural homogeneity at the expense of *internal* diversity.

Nor can any necessary relationship be established between *mestizaje* [“racial intermingling, racial mixture”—ed. note] and the colonial world. The latter is highly complex¹ despite basic structural affinities of its parts. It has included countries with well-defined millennial cultures, some of which have suffered (or are presently suffering) direct occupation (India, Vietnam), and others of which have suffered indirect occupation (China). It also comprehends countries with rich cultures but less political homogeneity, which have been subjected to extremely diverse forms of colonialism (the Arab world). There are other peoples, finally, whose fundamental structures were savagely dislocated by the directivity of the European despite which they continue to preserve a certain ethnic and cultural homogeneity (black Africa). (Indeed, the latter has occurred despite the colonialists’ criminal and unsuccessful attempts to prohibit it.) In these countries *mestizaje* naturally exists to a greater or lesser degree, but it is always accidental and always on the fringe of the central line of development.

But within the colonial world there exists a case unique to *the entire planet*: a vast zone for which *mestizaje* is not an accident but rather the essence, the central line: ourselves, “our *mestizo* America.” Martí, with his excellent knowledge of the language, employed this specific adjective as the distinctive sign of our culture—a culture of descendants, both ethnically and culturally speaking, of aborigines, Africans, and Europeans. In his “Letter from Jamaica” (1815), the Liberator, Simón Bolívar, had proclaimed, “We are a small human species: we possess a world encircled by vast seas, new in almost all its arts and sciences.” In his message to the Congress of Angostura (1819), he added:

Let us bear in mind that our people is neither European nor North American, but a composite of Africa and America rather than an emanation of Europe; for even Spain fails as a European people because of her African blood, her institutions, and her character. It is impossible to assign us with any exactitude to a specific human family. The greater part of the native peoples has been annihilated; the European has mingled with the American and with the African, and the African has mingled with the Indian and with the European. Born from the womb of a common mother, our fathers, different in origin and blood, are foreigners; all differ visibly in the epidermis, and this dissimilarity leaves marks of the greatest transcendence.

Even in this century, in a book as confused as the author himself but full of intuitions (*La raza cósmica*, 1925), the Mexican José Vasconcelos pointed out that in Latin America a new race was being forged, “made with the treasure of all previous ones, the final race, the cosmic race.”²

This singular fact lies at the root of countless misunderstandings. Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Arab, or African cultures may leave the Euro-North American enthusiastic, indifferent, or even depressed. But it would never occur to him to confuse a Chinese with a Norwegian, or a Bantu with an Italian; nor would it occur to him to ask whether they exist. Yet, on the other hand, some Latin Americans are taken at times for apprentices, for rough drafts or dull copies of Europeans, including among these latter whites who constitute what Martí called “European America.” In the same way, our entire culture is taken as an apprenticeship, a rough draft or a copy of European bourgeois culture (“an emanation of Europe,” as Bolívar said). This last error is more frequent than the first, since confusion of a Cuban with an Englishman, or a Guatemalan with a German, tends to be impeded by a certain ethnic tenacity. Here the *rioplatenses* appear to be less ethnically, although not culturally, differentiated. The confusion lies in the root itself, because as descendants of numerous Indian, African, and European communities, we have only a few languages with which to understand one another: those of the colonizers. While other colonials or ex-colonials in metropolitan centers speak among themselves in their own language, we Latin Americans continue to use the languages of our colonizers. These are the *linguas francas* capable of going beyond the frontiers that neither the aboriginal nor Creole languages succeed in crossing. Right now as we are discussing, as I am discussing with those colonizers, how else can I do it except in one of their languages, which is now also *our* language, and with so many of their conceptual tools, which are now also *our* conceptual tools? This is precisely the extraordinary outcry that we read in a work by perhaps the most extraordinary writer of fiction who ever existed. In *The Tempest*, William Shakespeare’s last play, the deformed Caliban—enslaved, robbed of his island, and trained to speak by Prospero—rebukes Prospero thus: “You taught me language, and my profit on’t/ Is, I know

how to curse. The red plague rid you! For learning me your language!" (1.2.362-64).

Toward the History of Caliban

Caliban is Shakespeare's anagram for "cannibal," an expression that he had already used to mean "anthropophagus," in the third part of *Henry IV* and in *Othello* and that comes in turn from the word *carib*. Before the arrival of the Europeans, whom they resisted heroically, the Carib Indians were the most valiant and warlike inhabitants of the very lands that we occupy today. Their name lives on in the name Caribbean Sea (referred to genially by some as the American Mediterranean, just as if we were to call the Mediterranean the Caribbean of Europe). But the name *carib* in itself—as well as in its deformation, *cannibal*—has been perpetuated in the eyes of Europeans above all as a defamation. It is the term in this sense that Shakespeare takes up and elaborates into a complex symbol. Because of its exceptional importance to us, it will be useful to trace its history in some detail.

In the *Diario de Navegación* [Navigation logbooks] of Columbus there appear the first European accounts of the men who were to occasion the symbol in question. On Sunday, 4 November 1492, less than a month after Columbus arrived on the continent that was to be called America, the following entry was inscribed: "He learned also that far from the place there were men with one eye and others with dogs' muzzles, who ate human beings."³ On 23 November, this entry: "[the island of Haiti], which they said was very large and that on it lived people who had only one eye and others called cannibals, of whom they seemed to be very afraid." On 11 December it is noted "... that *caniba* refers in fact to the people of El Gran Can," which explains the deformation undergone by the name *carib*—also used by Columbus. In the very letter of 15 February 1493, "dated on the caravelle off the island of Canaria" in which Columbus announces to the world his "discovery," he writes: "I have found, then, neither monsters nor news of any, save for one island [Quarives], the second upon entering the Indies, which is populated with people held by everyone on the islands to be very ferocious, and who eat human flesh."⁴

This *carib/cannibal* image contrasts with another one of the American man presented in the writings of Columbus: that of the *Araucó* of the Greater Antilles—our *Taino* Indian primarily—whom he describes as peaceful, meek, and even timorous and cowardly. Both visions of the American aborigine will circulate vertiginously throughout Europe, each coming to know its own particular development: The *Taino* will be transformed into the paradisaical inhabitant of a utopic world; by 1516 Thomas More will publish his *Utopia*, the similarities of which to the island of Cuba have been indicated, almost to the point of rapture,

by Ezequiel Martínez Estrada.⁵ The Carib, on the other hand, will become a *cannibal*—an anthropophagus, a bestial man situated on the margins of civilization, who must be opposed to the very death. But there is less of a contradiction than might appear at first glance between the two visions; they constitute, simply, options in the ideological arsenal of a vigorous emerging bourgeoisie. Francisco de Quevedo translated "utopia" as "there is no such place." With respect to these two visions, one might add, "There is no such man." The notion of an Edenic creature comprehends, in more contemporary terms, a working hypothesis for the bourgeois left, and, as such, offers an ideal model of the perfect society free from the constrictions of that feudal world against which the bourgeoisie is in fact struggling. Generally speaking, the utopic vision throws upon these lands projects for political reforms unrealized in the countries of origin. In this sense its line of development is far from extinguished. Indeed, it meets with certain perpetrators—apart from its radical perpetrators, who are the consequential revolutionaries—in the numerous advisers who unflinchingly propose to countries emerging from colonialism magic formulas from the metropolis to solve the grave problems colonialism has left us and which, of course, they have not yet resolved in their own countries. It goes without saying that these proponents of "There is no such place" are irritated by the insolent fact that the place *does* exist and, quite naturally, has all the virtues and defects not of a project but of genuine reality.

As for the vision of the *cannibal*, it corresponds—also in more contemporary terms—to the right wing of that same bourgeoisie. It belongs to the ideological arsenal of politicians of action, those who perform the dirty work in whose fruits the charming dreamers of utopias will equally share. That the Caribs were as *Columbus* (and, after him, an unending throng of followers) depicted them is about as probably as the existence of one-eyed men, men with dog muzzles or tails, or even the Amazons mentioned by the explorer in pages where Greco-Roman mythology, the medieval bestiary, and the novel of chivalry all play their part. It is a question of the typically degraded vision offered by the colonizer of the man he is colonizing. That we ourselves may have at one time believed in this version only proves to what extent we are infected with the ideology of the enemy. It is typical that we have applied the term *cannibal* not to the extinct aborigine of our isles but, above all, to the African black who appeared in those shameful Tarzan films. For it is the colonizer who brings us together, who reveals the profound similarities existing above and beyond our secondary differences. The colonizer's version explains to us that owing to the Caribs' irremediable bestiality, there was no alternative to their extermination. What it does not explain is why even before the Caribs, the peaceful and kindly Araucos were also exterminated. Simply speaking, the two groups suffered jointly one of the greatest ethnocides recorded in history. (Needless to say, this line of action is still more alive than the earlier one.) In relation to this fact, it will always be necessary to point out the case of

those men who, being on the fringe both of utopianism (which has nothing to do with the actual America) and of the shameless ideology of plunder, stood in their midst opposed to the conduct of the colonialists and passionately, lucidly, and valiantly defended the flesh-and-blood aborigine. In the forefront of such men stands the magnificent figure of Father Bartolomé de las Casas, whom Bolívar called "the apostle of America" and whom Martí extolled unreservedly. Unfortunately, such men were exceptions.

One of the most widely disseminated European utopian works is Montaigne's essay "De los caníbales" [On Cannibals], which appeared in 1580. There we find a presentation of those creatures who "retain alive and vigorous their genuine, their most useful and natural, virtues and properties."⁶

Giovanni Floro's English translation of the *Essays* was published in 1603. Not only was Floro a personal friend of Shakespeare, but the copy of the translation that Shakespeare owned and annotated is still extant. This piece of information would be of no further importance but for the fact that it proves beyond a shadow of doubt that the *Essays* was one of the direct sources of Shakespeare's last great work, *The Tempest* (1612). Even one of the characters of the play, Gonzalo, who incarnates the Renaissance humanist, at one point closely glosses entire lines from Floro's Montaigne, originating precisely in the essay on cannibals. This fact makes the form in which Shakespeare presents his character *Caliban/cannibal* even stranger. Because if in Montaigne—in this case, as unquestionable literary source for Shakespeare—"there is nothing barbarous and savage in that nation . . . , except that each man calls barbarism whatever is not his own practice,"⁷ in Shakespeare, on the other hand, *Caliban/cannibal* is a savage and deformed slave who cannot be degraded enough. What has happened is simply that in depicting Caliban, Shakespeare, an implacable realist, here takes the *other option* of the emerging bourgeois world. Regarding the utopian vision, it does indeed exist in the work but is unrelated to Caliban; as was said before, it is expressed by the harmonious humanist Gonzalo. Shakespeare thus confirms that both ways of considering the American, far from being in opposition, were perfectly reconcilable. As for the concrete man, present him in the guise of an animal, rob him of his land, enslave him so as to live from his toil, and at the right moment exterminate him; this latter, of course, only if there were someone who could be depended on to perform the arduous tasks in his stead. In one revealing passage, Prospero warns his daughter that they could not do without Caliban: "We cannot miss him: he does make our fire./ Fetch in our wood, and serves in offices/ that profit us" (1.2.311–13). The utopian vision can and must do without men of flesh and blood. After all, *there is no such place*.

There is no doubt at this point that *The Tempest* alludes to America, that its island is the mythification of one of our islands. Astrana Marín, who mentions the "clearly Indian (American) ambience of the island," recalls some of the actual voyages along this continent that inspired Shakespeare and even furnished

him, with slight variations, with the names of not a few of his characters: Miranda, Fernando, Sebastian, Alonso, Gonzalo, Setebos.⁸ More important than this is the knowledge that Caliban is our Carib.

We are not interested in following all the possible readings that have been made of this notable work since its appearance,⁹ and shall merely point out some interpretations. The first of these comes from Ernest Renan, who published his drama *Caliban: Suite de "La Tempête"* in 1878.¹⁰ In this work, Caliban is the incarnation of the people presented in their worst light, except that this time his conspiracy against Prospero is successful and he achieves power—which ineptitude and corruption will surely prevent him from retaining. Prospero lurks in the darkness awaiting his revenge, and Ariel disappears. This reading owes less to Shakespeare than to the Paris Commune, which had taken place only seven years before. Naturally, Renan was among the writers of the French bourgeoisie who savagely took part against the prodigious "assault of heaven."¹¹ Beginning with this event, his antidemocratic feeling stiffened even further. "In his *Philosophical Dialogues*," Lidsky tells us, "he believes that the solution would lie in the creation of an *élite* of intelligent beings who alone would govern and possess the secrets of science."¹² Characteristically, Renan's aristocratic and prefascist elitism and his hatred of the common people of his country are united with an even greater hatred for the inhabitants of the colonies. It is instructive to hear him express himself along these lines.

We aspire [he says] not only to equality but to domination. The country of a foreign race must again be a country of serfs, of agricultural laborers or industrial workers. It is not a question of eliminating the inequalities among men but of broadening them and making them law.¹³

And on another occasion:

The regeneration of the inferior or bastard races by the superior races is within the providential human order. With us, the common man is nearly always a *declassé* nobleman, his heavy hand is better suited to handling the sword than the menial tool. Rather than work he chooses to fight, that is, he returns to his first state. *Regere imperio populos*—that is our vocation. Pour forth this all-consuming activity onto countries which, like China, are crying aloud for foreign conquest. . . . Nature has made a race of workers, the Chinese race, with its marvelous manual dexterity and almost no sense of honor; govern them with justice, levying from them, in return for the blessing of such a government, an ample allowance for the conquering race, and they will be satisfied; a race of tillers of the soil, the black . . . a race of masters and soldiers, the European race. . . . *Let each do that which he is made for, and all will be well.*¹⁴

It is unnecessary to gloss these lines, which, as Césaire rightly says, came from the pen not of Hitler but of the French humanist Ernest Renan.

The initial destiny of the Caliban myth on our own American soil is a surprising one. Twenty years after Renan had published his *Caliban*—in other words, in 1898—the United States intervened in the Cuban war of independence against Spain and subjected Cuba to its tutelage, converting her in 1902 into her first *neocolony* (and holding her until 1959), while Puerto Rico and the Philippines became colonies of a traditional nature. The fact—which had been anticipated by Martí years before—moved the Latin-American *intelligentsia*. Elsewhere I have recalled that “ninety-eight” is not only a Spanish date that gives its name to a complex group of writers and thinkers of that country, but it is also, and perhaps most importantly, a Latin-American date that should serve to designate a no less complex group of writers and thinkers on this side of the Atlantic, generally known by the vague name of *modernistas*.¹⁵ It is “ninety-eight”—the visible presence of North American imperialism in Latin America—already foretold by Martí, which informs the later work of someone like Darío or Rodó.

In a speech given by Paul Groussac in Buenos Aires on 2 May 1898, we have an early example of how Latin-American writers of the time would react to this situation:

Since the Civil War and the brutal invasion of the West [he says], the Yankee spirit had rid itself completely of its formless and “Calibanesque” body, and the Old World has contemplated with disquiet and terror the newest civilization that intends to supplant our own, declared to be in decay.¹⁶

The Franco-Argentine writer Groussac feels that “our” civilization (obviously understanding by that term the civilization of the “Old World,” of which we Latin Americans would, curiously enough, be a part) is menaced by the Calibanesque Yankee. It seems highly improbable that the Algerian or Vietnamese writer of the time, trampled underfoot by French colonialism, would have been ready to subscribe to the first part of such a criterion. It is also frankly strange to see the Caliban symbol—in which Renan could with exactitude see, if only to abuse, the people—being applied to the United States. But nevertheless, despite this blurred focus—characteristic, on the other hand, of Latin America’s unique situation—Groussac’s reaction implies a clear rejection of the Yankee danger by Latin-American writers. This is not, however, the first time that such a rejection was expressed on our continent. Apart from cases of Hispanic writers such as Bolívar and Martí, among others, Brazilian literature presents the example of Joaquín de Sousa Andrade, or Sousaândrade, in whose strange poem, *O Guesa Errante*, stanza 10 is dedicated to “O inferno Wall Street,” “a *Walpurgisnacht* of corrupt stockbrokers, petty politicians, and businessmen.”¹⁷ There is besides

José Veríssimo, who in an 1890 treatise on national education impugned the United States with his “I admire them, but I don’t esteem them.”

We do not know whether the Uruguayan José Enrique Rodó—whose famous phrase on the United States, “I admire them, but I don’t love them,” coincides literally with Veríssimo’s observation—knew the work of that Brazilian thinker but it is certain that he was familiar with Groussac’s speech, essential portions of which were reproduced in *La Razón* of Montevideo on 6 May 1898. Developing and embellishing the idea outlined in it, Rodó published in 1900, at the age of twenty-nine, one of the most famous works of Latin-American literature: *Ariel*. North American civilization is implicitly presented there as Caliban (scarcely mentioned in the work), while Ariel would come to incarnate—or should incarnate—the best of what Rodó did not hesitate to call more than once “our civilization” (223, 226). In his words, just as in those of Groussac, this civilization was identified not only with “our Latin America” (239) but with ancient Roman-ia, if not with the Old World as a whole. The identification of Caliban with the United States, proposed by Groussac and popularized by Rodó, was certainly a mistake. Attacking this error from one angle, José Vasconcelos commented that “if the Yankees were only Caliban, they would not represent any great danger.”¹⁸ But this is doubtless of little importance next to the relevant fact that the danger in question had clearly been pointed out. As Benedetti rightly observed, “Perhaps Rodó erred in naming the danger, but he did not err in his recognition of where it lay.”¹⁹

Sometime afterward, the French writer Jean Guéhenno—who, although surely aware of the work by the colonial Rodó, knew of course Renan’s work from memory—restated the latter’s Caliban thesis in his own *Caliban parle* [Caliban speaks], published in Paris in 1929. This time, however, the Renan identification of Caliban with the people is accompanied by a positive evaluation of Caliban. One must be grateful to Guéhenno’s book—and it is about the only thing for which gratitude is due—for having offered for the first time an appealing version of the character.²⁰ But the theme would have required the hand or the rage of a Paul Nizan to be effectively realized.²¹

Much sharper are the observations of the Argentine Aníbal Ponce, in his 1935 work *Humanismo burgués y humanismo proletario*. The book—which a student of Che’s thinking conjectures must have exercised influence on the latter²²—devotes the third chapter to “Ariel; or, The Agony of an Obstinate Illusion.” In commenting on *The Tempest*, Ponce says that “those four beings embody an entire era: Prospero is the enlightened despot who loves the Renaissance; Miranda, his progeny; Caliban, the suffering masses [Ponce will then quote Renan, but not Guéhenno]; and Ariel, the genius of the air without any ties to life.”²³ Ponce points up the equivocal nature of Caliban’s presentation, one that reveals “an enormous injustice on the part of a master.” In Ariel he sees the intellectual, tied to Prospero in “less burdensome and crude a way than Caliban, but also in his

service." His analysis of the conception of the intellectual ("mixture of slave and mercenary") coined by Renaissance humanism, a concept that "taught as nothing else could an indifference to action and an acceptance of the established order" and that even today is for the intellectual in the bourgeois world "the educational ideal of the governing classes," constitutes one of the most penetrating essays written on the theme in our America.

But this examination, although made by a Latin American, still took only the European world into account. For a new reading of *The Tempest*—for a new consideration of the problem—it was necessary to await the emergence of the colonial countries, which begins around the time of the Second World War. That abrupt presence led the busy technicians of the United Nations to invent, between 1944 and 1945, the term *economically underdeveloped area* in order to dress in attractive (and profoundly confusing) verbal garb what had until then been called *colonial area*, or *backward areas*.²⁴

Concurrently with this emergence there appeared in Paris in 1950 O. Manni's book *Psychologie de la colonisation*. Significantly, the English edition of this book (New York, 1956) was to be called *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization*. To approach his subject, Manni has created, no less, what he calls the "Prospero complex," defined as "the sum of those unconscious neurotic tendencies that delineate at the same time the 'picture' of the paternalist colonial and the portrait of 'the racist whose daughter has been the object of an [imaginary] attempted rape at the hands of an inferior being.'"²⁵ In this book, probably for the first time, Caliban is identified with the colonial. But the odd theory that the latter suffers from a "Prospero complex" that leads him neurotically to require, even to anticipate, and naturally to accept the presence of Prospero/colonizer is roundly rejected by Frantz Fanon in the fourth chapter ("The So-Called Dependence Complex of Colonized Peoples") of his 1952 book *Black Skin, White Masks*.

Although he is (apparently) the first writer in our world to assume our identification with Caliban, the Barbadian writer George Lamming is unable to break the circle traced by Manni:

Prospero [says Lamming] has given Caliban language; and with it an unstated history of consequences, an unknown history of future intentions. This gift of language meant not English, in particular, but speech and concept as a way, a method, a necessary avenue towards areas of the self which could not be reached in any other way. It is this way, entirely Prospero's enterprise, which makes Caliban aware of possibilities. Therefore, all of Caliban's future—for future is the very name of possibilities—must derive from Prospero's experiment, which is also his risk. Provided there is no extraordinary departure which explodes all of Prospero's premises, then Caliban and his future now belong to Prospero . . . Prospero lives in the absolute certainty that

Language, which is his gift to Caliban, is the very prison in which Caliban's achievements will be realized and restricted.²⁶

In the decade of the 1960s, the new reading of *The Tempest* ultimately established its hegemony. In *The Living World of Shakespeare* (1964), the Englishman John Wain will tell us that Caliban

has the pathos of the exploited peoples everywhere, poignantly expressed at the beginning of a three-hundred-year wave of European colonization; even the lowest savage wishes to be left alone rather than be "educated" and made to work for someone else, and there is an undeniable justice in his complaint: "For I am all the subjects that you have./ Which once was mine own king." Prospero retorts with the inevitable answer of the colonist: Caliban has gained in knowledge and skill (though we recall that he already knew how to build dams to catch fish, and also to dig pig-nuts from the soil, as if this were the English countryside). Before being employed by Prospero, Caliban had no language: ". . . thou didst not, savage./ Know thy own meaning, but wouldst gabble like/ A thing most brutish." However, this kindness has been rewarded with ingratitude. Caliban, allowed to live in Prospero's cell, has made an attempt to ravish Miranda. When sternly reminded of this, he impertinently says, with a kind of slaving guffaw, "Oh ho! Oh ho!—would it have been done!/ Thou didst prevent me; I had peopled else/ This isle with Calibans." Our own age [Wain concludes], which is much given to using the horrible word "miscegenation," ought to have no difficulty in understanding this passage.²⁷

At the end of that same decade, in 1969, and in a highly significant manner, Caliban would be taken up with pride as our symbol by three Antillean writers—each of whom expresses himself in one of the three great colonial languages of the Caribbean. In that year, independently of one another, the Martinican writer Aimé Césaire published his dramatic work in French *Une tempête: Adaptation de "La Tempête" de Shakespeare pour un théâtre nègre*; the Barbadian Edward Brathwaite, his book of poems *Islands*, in English, among which there is one dedicated to "Caliban" and the author of these lines, an essay in Spanish, "Cuba hasta Fidel," which discusses our identification with Caliban.²⁸ In Césaire's work the characters are the same as those of Shakespeare. Ariel, however, is a mulatto slave, and Caliban is a black slave; in addition, Eshzú, "a black god-devil" appears. Prospero's remark when Ariel returns, full of scruples, after having unleashed—following Prospero's orders but against his won conscience—the tempest with which the work begins is curious indeed: "Come now!" Prospero says to him, "Your crisis! It's always the same with intellectuals!" Brathwaite's poem called "Caliban" is dedicated, significantly, to Cuba: "In Havana that morning . . ." writes Brathwaite, "It was December second, nineteen fifty-six./

It was the first of August eighteen thirty-eight./ It was the twelfth October fourteen ninety-two./ How many bangs how many revolutions?²⁹

Our Symbol

Our symbol then is not Ariel, as Rodó thought, but rather Caliban. This is something that we, the *mesizo* inhabitants of these same isles where Caliban lived, see with particular clarity: Prospero invaded the islands, killed our ancestors, enslaved Caliban, and taught him his language to make himself understood. What else can Caliban do but use that same language—today he has no other—to curse him, to wish that the “red plague” would fall on him? I know no other metaphor more expressive of our cultural situation, of our reality. From Túpac Amaru, *Tiradentes*, Toussaint-Louverture, Simón Bolívar, Father Hidalgo, José Artigas, Bernardo O’Higgins, Benito Juárez, Antonio Maceo, and José Martí, to Emiliano Zapata, Augusto César Sandino, Julio Antonio Mella, Pedro Albizu Campos, Lázaro Cárdenas, Fidel Castro, and Ernesto Che Guevara, from the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, the *Aleijadinho*, the popular music of the Antilles, José Hernández, Eugenio María de Hostos, Manuel González Prada, Rubén Darío (yes, when all is said and done), Baldomero Lillo, and Horacio Quiroga, to Mexican muralism, Heitor Villa-Lobos, César Vallejo, José Carlos Mariátegui, Ezequiel Martínez Estrada, Carlos Gardel, Pablo Neruda, Alejo Carpentier, Nicolás Guillén, Aimé Césaire, José María Arguedas, Violeta Parra, and Frantz Fanon—what is our history, what is our culture, if not the history and culture of Caliban?

As regards Rodó, if it is indeed true that he erred in his symbols, as has already been said, it is no less true that he was able to point with clarity to the greatest enemy of our culture in his time—and in ours—and that is enormously important. Rodó’s limitations (and this is not the moment to elucidate them) are responsible for what he saw unclearly or failed to see at all.³⁰ But what is worthy of note in his case is what he did indeed see and what continued to retain a certain amount of validity and even virulence.

Despite his failings, omissions, and ingenuousness [Benedetti has also said], Rodó’s vision of the Yankee phenomenon, rigorously situated in its historical context, was in its time the first launching pad for other less ingenuous, better informed and more foresighted formulations to come. . . . the almost prophetic substance of Rodó’s Arielism still retains today a certain amount of validity.³¹

These observations are supported by indisputable realities. We Cubans become well aware that Rodó’s vision fostered later, less ingenious, and more radical formulations when we simply consider the work of our own Julio Antonio Mella, on whose development the influence of Rodó was decisive. In “Intelec-

tuales y tartufos” [Intellectuals and Tartuffes] (1924), a vehement work written at the age of twenty-one, Mella violently attacks the false intellectual values of the time—opposing them with such names as Unamuno, José Vasconcelos, Ingenieros, and Varona. He writes, “The intellectual is the worker of the mind. The worker! That is, the only man who in Rodó’s judgment is worthy of life, . . . he who takes up his pen against iniquity just as others take up the plow to fecundate the earth, or the sword to liberate peoples, or a dagger to execute tyrants.”³²

Mella would again quote Rodó with devotion during that year³³ and in the following year he was to help found the Ariel Polytechnic Institute in Havana.³⁴ It is opportune to recall that in this same year, 1925, Mella was also among the founders of Cuba’s first Communist party. Without a doubt, Rodó’s *Ariel* served as a “launching pad” for the meteoric revolutionary career of this first organic Marxist-Leninist in Cuba (who was also one of the first on the continent.)

As further examples of the relative validity that Rodó’s anti-Yankee argument retains even in our own day, we can point to enemy attempts to disarm such an argument. A strange case is that of Emir Rodríguez Monegal, for whom *Ariel*, in addition to “material for philosophic or sociological meditation, also contains pages of a polemic nature on political problems of the moment. And it was precisely this *secondary* but undeniable condition that determined its immediate popularity and dissemination.” Rodó’s essential position against North American penetration would thus appear to be an afterthought, a *secondary* fact in the work. It is known, however, that Rodó conceived it immediately after American intervention in Cuba in 1898, as a *response to the deed*. Rodríguez Monegal says:

The work thus projected was *Ariel*. In the final version *only two direct allusions* are found to the historical fact that was its primary motive force; . . . both allusions enable us to appreciate how Rodó has *transcended* the initial historical circumstance to arrive fully at the essential problem: the proclaimed decadence of the Latin race.³⁵

The fact that a servant of imperialism such as Rodríguez Monegal, afflicted with the same “Nordo-mania” that Rodó denounced in 1900, tries so coarsely to emasculate Rodó’s work, only proves that it does indeed retain a certain virulence in its formulation—something that we would approach today from other perspectives and with other means. An analysis of *Ariel*—and this is absolutely not the occasion to make one—would lead us also to stress how, despite his background and his antiJacobinism, Rodó combats in it the antidemocratic spirit of Renan and Nietzsche (in whom he finds “an abominable, reactionary spirit” [224]) and exalts democracy, moral values, and emulation. But undoubtedly the rest of the work has lost the immediacy that its gallant confrontation of the United States and the defense of our values still retains.

Put into perspective, it is almost certain that these lines would not bear the name they have were it not for Rodó's book, and I prefer to consider them also as a homage to the great Uruguayan, whose centenary is being celebrated this year. That the homage contradicts him on not a few points is not strange. Medardo Vitier has already observed that "if there should be a return to Rodó, I do not believe that it would be to adopt the solution he offered concerning the interests of the life of the spirit, but rather to reconsider the problem."³⁶

In proposing Caliban as our symbol, I am aware that it is not entirely ours, that it is also an alien elaboration, although in this case based on our concrete realities. But how can this alien quality be entirely avoided? The most venerated word in Cuba — *mambí* — was disparagingly imposed on us by our enemies at the time of the war for independence, and we still have not totally deciphered its meaning. It seems to have an African root, and in the mouth of the Spanish colonists implied the idea that all *independentistas* were so many black slaves — emancipated by that very war for independence — who of course constituted the bulk of the liberation army. The *independentistas*, white and black, adopted with honor something that colonialism meant as an insult. This is the dialectic of Caliban. To offend us they call us *mambí*, they call us *black*; but we reclaim as a mark of glory the honor of considering ourselves descendants of the *mambí*, descendants of the rebel, runaway, *independentista* black — *never* descendants of the slave holder. Nevertheless, Propero, as we well know, taught his language to Caliban and, consequently, gave him a name. But is this his true name? Let us listen to this speech made in 1971:

To be completely precise, we still do not even have a name; we still have no name; we are practically unbaptized — whether as Latin Americans, Ibero-Americans, Indo-Americans. For the imperialists, we are nothing more than despised and despicable peoples. At least that was what we were. Since Girón they have begun to change their thinking. Racial contempt — to be a Creole, to be a mestizo, to be black, to be simply, a Latin American, is for them contemptible.³⁷

This, naturally, is Fidel Castro on the tenth anniversary of the victory at Playa Girón.

To assume our condition as Caliban implies rethinking our history from the other side, from the viewpoint of the other protagonist. The other protagonist of *The Tempest* (or, as we might have said ourselves, *The Hurricane*) is not of course Ariel but, rather, Prospero.³⁸ There is no real Ariel-Caliban polarity: both are slaves in the hands of Prospero, the foreign magician. But Caliban is the rude and unconquerable master of the island, while Ariel, a creature of the air, although also a child of the isle, is the intellectual — as both Ponce and Césaire have seen.

Again Martí

This conception of our culture had already been articulately expressed and defended in the last century by the first among us to understand clearly the concrete situation of what he called — using a term I have referred to several times — "our mestizo America": José Martí³⁹ to whom Rodó planned to dedicate the first Cuban edition of *Ariel* and about whom he intended to write a study similar to those he devoted to Bolívar and Artigas (see 1359, 1375), a study that in the end he unfortunately never realized.

Although he devoted numerous pages to the topic, the occasion on which Martí offered his ideas on this point in a most organic and concise manner was in his 1891 article "Our America." I will limit myself to certain essential quotations. But I should first like to offer some observations on the destiny of Martí's work.

During Martí's lifetime, the bulk of his work, scattered throughout a score of continental newspapers, enjoyed widespread fame. We know that Rubén Darío called Martí "Maestro" (as, for other reasons, his political followers would also call him during his lifetime) and considered him the Latin American whom he most admired. We shall soon see, on the other hand, how the harsh judgments on the United States that Martí commonly made in his articles, equally well known in his time, were the cause of acerbic criticism by the pro-Yankee Sarmiento. But the particular manner in which Martí's writings circulated — he made use of journalism, oratory, and letter but *never published a single book* — bears no little responsibility for the relative oblivion into which the work of the Cuban hero fell after his death in 1895. This alone explains the fact that nine years after his death — and twelve from the time Martí stopped writing for the continental press, devoted as he was after 1892 to his political tasks — an author as absolutely ours and as far above suspicion as the twenty-year-old Pedro Henríquez Ureña could write in 1904, in an article on Rodó's *Ariel*, that the latter's opinions on the United States are "much more severe than those formulated by two of the greatest thinkers and most brilliant psycho-sociologists of the Antilles: Hostos and Martí."⁴⁰ Insofar as this refers to Martí, the observation is completely erroneous; and given the exemplary honesty of Henríquez Ureña, it led me, first, to suspect and later, to verify that it was due simply to the fact that during this period the great Dominican had not read, *had been unable to read*, Martí adequately. Martí was hardly *published* at the time. A text such as the fundamental "Our America" is a good example of this fate. Readers of the Mexican newspaper *El Partido Liberal* could have read it on 30 January 1891. It is possible that some other local newspaper republished it,⁴¹ although the most recent edition of Martí's *Complete Works* does not indicate anything in this regard. But it is most likely that those who did not have the good fortune to obtain that newspaper knew nothing about the article — the most important document published in America from the end of the past

century until the appearance in 1962 of the Second Declaration of Havana—for almost twenty years, at the end of which time it appeared in book form (Havana, 1910) in the irregular collection in which publication of the complete works of Martí was begun. For this reason Manuel Pedro González is correct when he asserts that during the first quarter of this century the new generations did not know Martí. "A minimal portion of his work" was again put into circulation, starting with the eight volumes published by Alberto Ghirardo in Madrid in 1925. Thanks to the most recent appearance of several editions of his complete works—actually still incomplete—"he has been rediscovered and reevaluated."⁴² González is thinking above all of the dazzling literary qualities of this work ("the literary glory" as he says). Could we not add something, then, regarding the works' fundamental ideological aspects? Without forgetting very important prior contributions, there are still some essential points that explain why today, after the triumph of the Cuban Revolution and because of it, Martí is being "rediscovered and reevaluated." It was no mere coincidence that in 1953 Fidel named Martí as the intellectual author of the attack on the Moncade Barracks nor that Che should use a quotation from Martí—"it is the hour of the furnace, and only light should be seen"—to open his extremely important "Message to the Tricontinental Congress" in 1967. If Benedetti could say that Rodó's time "was different from our own . . . his true place, his true temporal homeland was the nineteenth century," we must say, on the other hand, that Martí's true place was the future and, for the moment, this era of ours, which simply cannot be understood without a thorough knowledge of this work.

Now, if that knowledge, because of the curious circumstances alluded to, was denied or available only in a limited way to the early generations of this century, who frequently had to base their defense of subsequent radical arguments on a "first launching pad" as well-intentioned but at the same time as weak as the nineteenth-century work *Ariel*, what can we say of more recent authors to whom editions of Martí are now available but who nevertheless persist in ignoring him? I am thinking, of course, not of scholars more or less ignorant of our problems but, on the contrary, of those who maintain a consistently anticolonialist attitude. The only explanation of this situation is a painful one: we have been so thoroughly steeped in colonialism that we read with real respect only those anticolonialist authors *disseminated from the metropolis*. In this way we cast aside the greatest lesson of Martí; thus, we are barely familiar with Artigas, Recabarren, Mella, and even Mariátegui and Ponce. And I have the sad suspicion that if the extraordinary texts of Che Guevara have enjoyed the greatest dissemination ever accorded a Latin American, the fact that he is read with such avidity by our people is to a certain extent due to the prestige his name has even in the metropolitan capitals—where, to be sure, he is frequently the object of the most shameful manipulation. For consistency in our anticolonialist attitude we must in effect turn to those of our people who have incarnated and illustrated that attitude in

their behavior and thinking.⁴³ And for this, there is no case more useful than that of Martí.

I know of no other Latin-American author who has given so immediate and so coherent an answer to another question put to me by my interlocutor, the European journalist whom I mentioned at the beginning of these lines (and whom, if he did not exist, I would have had to invent, although this would have deprived me of his friendship, which I trust will survive this monologue): "What relationship," this guileless wit asked me, "does Borges have to the Incas?" Borges is almost a *reductio ad absurdum* and, in any event, I shall discuss him later. But it is only right and fair to ask what relationship we, the present inhabitants of this America in whose zoological and cultural heritage Europe has played an unquestionable part, have to the primitive inhabitants of this same America—those peoples who constructed or were in the process of constructing admirable cultures and who were exterminated or martyred by Europeans of various nations, about whom neither a white nor black legend can be built, only an infernal truth of blood, that, together with such deeds as the enslavement of Africans, constitutes their eternal dishonor. Martí, whose father was from Valencia and whose mother was from the Canaries, who wrote the most prodigious Spanish of his—and our—age, and who came to have the greatest knowledge of the Euro-North American culture ever possessed by a man of our American, also asked this question. He answered it as follows: "We are descended from Valencian fathers and Canary Island mothers and feel the inflamed blood of Tamanaco and Paramaconi coursing through our veins; we see the blood that fell amid the brambles of Mount Calvary as our own, along with that shed by the naked and heroic Caracas as they struggled breast to breast with the gonzalos in their iron-plated armor."⁴⁴

I presume that the reader, if he or she is not a Venezuelan, will be unfamiliar with the names evoked by Martí. So was I. This lack of familiarity is but another proof of our subjection to the colonialist perspective of history that has been imposed on us, causing names, dates, circumstances, and truths to vanish from our consciousness. Under other circumstances—but closely related to these—did not the bourgeois version of history try to erase the heroes of the Commune of 1871, the martyrs of 1 May 1886 (significantly reclaimed by Martí)? At any rate, Tamanaco, Paramaconi, "the naked and heroic Caracas" were natives of what is today called Venezuela, of *Carib blood*, the blood of *Caliban*, coursing through his veins. This will not be the only time he expresses such an idea, which is central to his thinking.⁴⁵ Again making use of such heroes, he was to repeat some time later: "We must stand with Guaicaipuro, Paramaconi [heroes of Venezuela, probably of Carib origin], and not with the flames that burned them, nor with the ropes that bound them, nor with the steel that beheaded them, nor with the dogs that devoured them."⁴⁶ Martí's rejection of the ethnocide that Europe practiced is total. No less total is his identification with the American peoples that offered heroic resistance to the invader, and in whom Martí says the natural forerunners of

the Latin-American *independentistas*. This explains why in the notebook in which this last quotation appears, he continues writing, almost without transition, on Aztec mythology ('no less beautiful than the Greek'), on the ashes of Quetzacoatl, on 'Ayachucho on the solitary plateau,' on 'Bolívar, like the rivers.'⁴⁷

Martí, however, dreams not of a restoration now impossible but of the future integration of our America—an America rising organically from a firm grasp of its true roots to the heights of authentic modernity. For this reason, the first quotation in which he speaks of feeling valiant Carib blood coursing through his veins continues as follows:

It is good to open canals, to promote schools, to create steamship lines, to keep abreast of one's own time, to be on the side of the vanguard in the beautiful march of humanity. But in order not to falter because of a lack of spirit or the vanity of a false spirit, it is good also to nourish oneself through memory and admiration, through righteous study and loving compassion, on that fervent spirit of the natural surroundings in which one is born—a spirit matured and quickened by those of every race that issues from such surroundings and finds its final repose in them. Politics and literature flourish only when they are direct. The American intelligence is an indigenous plumage. Is it not evident that America itself was paralyzed by the same blow that paralyzed the Indian? And until the Indian is caused to walk, America itself will not begin to walk well. ['AAA,' 337]

Martí's identification with our aboriginal culture was thus accompanied by a complete sense of the concrete tasks imposed upon him by his circumstances. Far from hampering him, that identification nurtured in him the most radical and modern criteria of his time in the colonial countries.

Naturally, Martí's approach to the Indian was also applied to the black.⁴⁸ Unfortunately, while in his day serious inquiries into American aboriginal cultures (which Martí studied passionately) had already been undertaken, only in the twentieth century would then appear similar studies of African cultures and their considerable contribution to the makeup of our mestizo America (see Frobenius, Delafosse, Suret-Canale; Ortiz, Ramos, Herskovits, Roumain, Métraux, Bastide, Franco).⁴⁹ And Martí died five years before the dawning of our century. In any event, in his treatment of Indian culture and in his concrete behavior toward the black, he left a very clear outline of a "battle plan" in this area.

This is the way in which Martí forms his Calibanesque vision of the culture of what he called "our America." Martí is, as Fidel was later to be, aware of how difficult it is even to find a name that in designating us defines us conceptually. For this reason, after several attempts, he favored that modest descriptive formula that above and beyond race, language, and secondary circumstances em-

braces the communities that live, with their common problems, "from the [Rio] Bravo to Patagonia," and that are distinct from "European America." I have already said that although it is found scattered throughout his very numerous writings, this conception of our culture is aptly summarized in the article-manifesto "Our America," and I direct the reader to it: to his insistence upon the idea that one cannot "rule new peoples with a singular and violent composition, with laws inherited from four centuries of free practice in the United States, or nineteen centuries of monarchy in France. One does not stop the blow in the chest of the plainsman's horse with one of Hamilton's decrees. One does not clear the congealed blood of the Indian race with a sentence of Sieyès"; to his deeply rooted concept that "the imported book has been conquered in America by the natural man. Natural men have conquered the artificial men of learning. *The authentic mestizo has conquered the exotic Creole*" (my emphasis); and finally to his fundamental advice:

The European university must yield to the American university. The history of America, from the Incas to the present, must be taught letter perfect, even if that of the Argonauts of Greece is not taught. Our own Greece is preferable to that Greece that is not ours. We have greater need of it. National politicians must replace foreign and exotic politicians. Graft the world onto our republics, but the trunk must be that of our republics. And let the conquered pedant be silent: there is no homeland of which the individual can be more proud than our unhappy American republics.

The Real Life of a False Dilemma

It is impossible not to see in this text—which, as has been said, summarizes in lightening fashion Martí's judgment on this essential problem—his violent rejection of the imposition of Prospero ("the European university [. . .] the European book [. . .] the Yankee book"), which "must yield" to the reality of Caliban ("the [Latin] American university [. . .] the Latin American enigma"): "The history of America, from the Incas to the present, must be taught letter perfect even, if that of the Argonauts of Greece is not taught. Our own Greece is preferable to that Greece that is not ours." And later: "Common cause must be made with the oppressed so as to secure the system against the interest and customs of the oppressors."

But our America has also heard, expressed with vehemence by a talented and energetic man who died three years before Martí's work appeared, the thesis that was the exact opposite: the thesis of Prospero.⁵⁰ The interlocutors were not called then Prospero and Caliban, but rather *Civilization and Barbarism*, the title that the Argentinean Domingo Faustino Sarmiento gave to the first edition (1845) of his great book on Facundo Quiroga. I do not believe that autobiographical con-

fessions are of much interest here, but since I have already mentioned, by way of self-inflicted punishment, the forgettable pleasures of the westerns and Tarzan films by which we were inoculated, unbeknownst to us, with the ideology that we verbally repudiated in the Nazis (I was twelve years old when the Second World War was at its height), I must also confess that only a few years afterward, I read this book passionately. In the margins of my old copy, I find my enthusiasms, my rejections of the "tyrant of the Republic of Argentina" who had exclaimed, "Traitors to the American cause!" I also find, a few pages later, the comment, "It is strange how one thinks of Perón." It was many years later, specifically after the triumph of the Cuban Revolution in 1959 (when we began to live and to read the world in another way), that I understood I had not been on the best side in that otherwise remarkable book. It was not possible to be simultaneously in agreement with *Facundo* and with "Our America." What is more, "Our America" — along with a large part of Martí's entire work — is an implicit, and at times explicit, dialogue with the Sarmiento theses. If not, what then does this lapidary sentence of Martí's mean: "*There is no battle between civilization and barbarism*, only between false erudition and nature." Eight years before "Our America" appeared (1891) — within Sarmiento's lifetime — Martí had already spoken (in the sentence I have quoted more than once) of the "pretext that civilization, which is the vulgar name under which contemporary European man operates, has the natural right to seize the land of foreigners, which is the name given by those who desire foreign lands to every contemporary human being who does not come from Europe or European America."⁵¹ In both cases, Martí rejects the false dichotomy that Sarmiento, falling into the trap adroitly set by the colonizer, takes for granted. For this reason, when I said sometime ago that "in coming out on the side of 'barbarism' Martí foreshadows Fanon and our Revolution"⁵² (a phrase that some hasty people, without noticing the quotation marks, misunderstood — as if Fanon, Fidel, and Che were apostles of barbarism), I wrote "barbarism" in this way, between quotation marks, to indicate that in fact there was not such state. The presumed barbarism of our peoples was invented with crude cynicism by "those who desire foreign lands"; those who, with equal effrontery, give the "popular name" of "civilization" to the "contemporary" human being who comes "from Europe or European America." What was surely more painful for Martí was to see a man of our America — a man whom, despite incurable differences, he admired in his positive aspects⁵³ — fall into this very grave error. Thinking of figures such as Sarmiento, it was Martínez Estrada (who had previously written so many pages extolling Sarmiento) who in 1962 wrote in his book *Diferencias y semejanzas entre los países de la América Latina* [Similarities and Differences among Latin-American Countries]:

We can immediately establish the premise that those who have worked, in some cases patriotically, to shape social life in complete accordance

with models of other highly developed countries, whose practices are the result of an organic process over the course of centuries, have betrayed the cause of the true emancipation of Latin America.⁵⁴

I lack the necessary information to discuss here the virtues and defects of this bourgeois antagonist and shall limit myself to pointing out this opposition to Martí, and the coherence between his thought and conduct. As a postulator of *Civilization*, which he found incarnated in archetypal form in the United States, he advocated the extermination of the indigenous peoples according to the savage Yankee model; what is more, he adored that growing republic to the north that had by mid-century still not demonstrated so clearly the flaws that Martí would later discover. In both extremes — and they are precisely that: extremes, margins of their respective thinking — he and Martí differed irreconcilably.

Jaime Alazraki has studied with some care "El indigenismo de Martí y el antindigenismo de Sarmiento" [The indigenism of Martí and the anti-indigenism of Sarmiento].⁵⁵ I refer the reader interested in the subject to this essay; here I shall only draw on some of the quotations from the works of both included in that study. I have already mentioned some of Martí's observations on the Indian. Alazraki recalls others:

No more than peoples in blossom, no more than the bulbs of peoples, were those the valiant conquistador marched upon; with his subtle craftiness of the old-time opportunist, he discharged his powerful firearms. It was a historic misfortune and a natural crime. The well-formed stalk should have been left standing, the entire flowering work of Nature could then be seen in all its beauty. The conquistadors stole a page from the Universe!

And further:

Of all that greatness there remains in the museum scarcely a few gold cups, a few stones of polished obsidian shaped like a yoke, and one or two wrought rings. Tenochtitlán does not exist, nor Tulán, the city of the great fair, Texcoco, the city of the palaces, is no more. Indians of today, passing before the ruins, lower their heads and move their lips as if saying something; they do not put on their hats again until the ruins are left behind.

For Sarmiento, the history of America is the "bands of abject races, a great continent abandoned to savages incapable of progress." If we want to know how he interpreted the maxim of his compatriot Alberdi that "to govern is to populate," we must read this: "Many difficulties will be presented by the occupation of so extensive a country; but there will be no advantage comparable to that gained by the extinction of the savage tribes." That is to say, for Sarmiento, to govern is also to *depopulate* the nation of its Indians (and gauchos). And what of the heroes

of the resistance against the Spaniards, those magnificent men whose rebellious blood Martí felt coursing through his veins? Sarmiento has also questioned himself about them. This is his response:

For us, Colocolo, Lautaro, and Caupolicán, notwithstanding the noble and civilized garb with which they are adorned by Ercilla, are nothing more than a handful of loathesome Indians. We would have them hanged today were they to reappear in a war of the Araucanos against Chile, a country that has nothing to do with such rabble.

This naturally implies a vision of the Spanish conquest radically different from that upheld by Martí. For Sarmiento, "Spanish—repeated a hundred times in the odious sense of impious, immoral, ravisher and impostor—is synonymous with civilization, with the European tradition brought by them to these countries." And while for Martí, "there is no racial hatred, because there are no races," the author of *Conflicto y armonías de las razas en América* [Conflict and Harmony among the Races in America] bases himself thus on pseudoscientific theories:

It may be very unjust to exterminate savages, suffocate rising civilizations, conquer peoples who are in possession of a privileged piece of land. But thanks to this injustice, America, instead of remaining abandoned to the savages, incapable of progress, is today occupied by the Caucasian race—the most perfect, the most intelligent, the most beautiful and most progressive of those that people the earth. Thanks to these injustices, Oceania is filled with civilized peoples, Asia begins to move under the European impulse, Africa sees the times of Carthage and the glorious days of Egypt reborn on her coasts. Thus, the population of the world is subject to revolutions that recognize immutable laws; the strong races exterminate the weak ones and the civilized peoples supplant the savages in the possession of the earth.

There was no need then to cross the Atlantic and seek out Renan to hear such words: a man of this America was saying them. The fact is that if he did not learn them on this side of the ocean, they were at least reinforced for him here—not in our America but in the other, "European [. . .] America," of which Sarmiento was the most fanatical devotee in our mestizo lands during the nineteenth century. Although in that century there is no shortage of Latin Americans who adored the Yankees, our discovery of people among us equal to Sarmiento in their devotion to the United States would be due above all to the ranting seqoyism in which our twentieth-century Latin America has been so prodigal. What Sarmiento wanted for Argentina was exactly what the United States had achieved for itself. The last words he wrote (1888) were: "We shall catch up to the United States. . . . Let us become the United States." His travels in that country produced in him a genuine

bedazzlement, a never-ending historical orgasm. He tried to establish in his homeland the bases for an enterprising bourgeoisie, similar to what he saw there. Its present fate makes any commentary unnecessary.

What Martí saw in the United States is also sufficiently well known that we need not dwell upon the point. Suffice it to recall that he was the first militant anti-imperialist of our continent; that he denounced over a period of fifteen years "the crude, inequitable, the decadent character of the United States, and the continued existence therein of all the violence, discord, immorality, and disorder for which the Hispano-American peoples are censured";⁵⁶ that a few hours before his death on the battlefield, he confided in a letter to his great friend, the Mexican Manuel Mercado, "Everything I have done to this day, and everything I shall do is to that end [. . .] to prevent in time the expansion of the United States into the Antilles and to prevent her from falling, with ever greater force, upon our American lands."⁵⁷

Sarmiento did not remain silent before the criticism that Martí—frequently from the very pages of *La Nación*—leveled against his idolized United States. He commented on one occasion on this incredible boldness:

Don José Martí lacks only one requirement to be a journalist . . . He has failed to regenerate himself, to educate himself, so to speak, to receive inspiration from the country in which he lives, as one receives food so as to convert it into life-giving blood. . . . I should like Martí to give us less of Martí, less of the purebred Spaniard, and less of the South American, and in exchange, a little more of the Yankee—the new type of modern man. . . . It is amusing to hear a Frenchman of the *Courier des États-Unis* laughing at the stupidities and political incompetence of the Yankees, whose institutions Gladstone proclaims the supreme work of the human race. But to criticize with magisterial airs that which a Latin American, a Spaniard, sees there, with a confetti of political judgement transmitted to him by the books of other nations—as if trying to see sunspots through a blurred glass—is to do the reader a very grave injustice and lead him down the path of perdition. . . . Let them not come to us, then, with their insolent humility of South Americans, semi-Indians and semi-Spaniards, to find evil.⁵⁸

Sarmiento, who was as vehement in his praise as his invective, here places Martí among the "semi-Indians." This was in essence true and for Martí a point of pride; but we have already seen what it implied in the mouth of Sarmiento . . .

For these reasons, and despite the fact that highly esteemed writers have tried to point out possible similarities, I think it will be understood how difficult it is to accept a parallel between these two men, such as the one elaborated by Emeterio S. Santovenia in the 262 sloppy pages of *Genio y acción: Sarmiento y Martí*. A sample will suffice: according to this author, "Above and beyond the discrepan-

cies in the achievements and limitations of their respective projections concerning America, there does emerge a coincidence [*sic*] in their evaluations [those of Sarmiento and Martí] of the Anglo-Saxon role in the development of political and social ideas that fertilized the tree of total emancipation in the New World."⁵⁹

This luxuriant undergrowth of thought, syntax, and metaphor gives some indication of what our culture was like when we were part of the "free world," of which Mr. Santovenia (as well as being one of Batista's ministers in his moments of leisure) was so eminent a representative.

On the Free World

But the portion of the free world that corresponds to Latin America can boast today of much more memorable figures. There is Jorge Luis Borges, for example, whose name seems to be associated with "memorable." The Borges I have in mind is the one who only a short time ago dedicated his (presumably good) translation of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* to United States President Richard Nixon. It is true that Borges wrote in 1926, "I want to speak to the Creoles—to those who feel their existence deeply rooted in our lands, not to those who think the sun and the moon are in Europe. This is a land of born exiles, of men nostalgic for the far-off and the foreign: they are the real gringos, regardless of their parentage, and I do not address myself to them." It is also true that Sarmiento is presented at that time as a "North American Indian brave, who loathed and misprized anything Creole."⁶⁰ But the fact is that *Borges* is not the one who has gone down in history. This "memorable" individual decided to forget the little book of his youth, that he wrote only a few years after having been a member of "the sect, the blunder, called Ultraism." In his eyes that book and the ideas in it were also a blunder. Pathetically faithful to his class,⁶¹ it was a different Borges who would become so well known, attain such great circulation abroad, and experience the public acclaim of innumerable literary prizes—some of which are so obscure that he would seem to have awarded them himself. The Borges in question, to whom we shall dedicate a few lines here, is the one who echoes Sarmiento's grotesque "We belong to the Roman Empire," with this declaration not of 1926 but of 1955: "I believe that our tradition is Europe."⁶²

It might seem strange that the ideological filiation of such an energetic and blustering pioneer would come to be manifest today in a man so sedate, a writer such as Borges—the archetypal representative of a bookish culture that on the surface seems far removed from Sarmiento's constant vitality. But this strangeness only demonstrates how accustomed we are to judging the superstructural products of our continent, if not of the whole world, without regard to their concrete structural realities. Except by considering these realities, how would we

recognize the insipid disasters who are the bourgeois intellectuals of our time as descending from those vigorous and daring thinkers of the rising bourgeoisie? We need only consider our writers and thinkers in relation to the classes whose world view they expound in order to orient ourselves properly and outline their true filiations. The dialogue we have just witnessed between Sarmiento and Martí was, more than anything else, a class confrontation.

Independently of his (class) origin, Sarmiento is the implacable ideologue of an Argentine bourgeoisie that is attempting to transport bourgeois policies of the metropolitan centers (particularly those of North America) to its own country. To be successful, it must impose itself, like all bourgeoisies, upon the popular classes; it must exploit them physically and condemn them spiritually. The manner in which a bourgeoisie develops at the expense of the popular classes' brutalization is memorably demonstrated, taking England as an example, in some of the most impressive pages of *Das Kapital*. "European America," whose capitalism succeeded in expanding fabulously—unhindered as it was by the feudalistic order—added new circles of hell to England's achievements: the enslavement of the Negro and the extermination of the indomitable Indian. These were the models to which Sarmiento looked and which he proposed to follow faithfully. He is perhaps the most consequential and the most active of the bourgeois ideologues on our continent during the nineteenth century.

Martí, on the other hand, is a conscious spokesman of the exploited classes. "Common cause must be made with the oppressed," he told us, "so as to secure the system against the interests and customs of the oppressors." And, since beginning with the conquest Indians and blacks have been relegated to the base of the social pyramid, making common cause with the oppressed came largely to be the same as making common cause with Indians and blacks—which is what Martí does. These Indians and those blacks had been intermingling among themselves and with some whites, giving rise to the *mestizaje* that is at the root of our America, where—according to Martí—"the authentic mestizo has conquered the exotic Creole." Sarmiento is a ferocious racist because he is an ideologue of the exploiting classes, in whose ranks the "exotic Creole" is found. Martí is radically antiracist because he is a spokesman for the exploited classes, within which the three races are fusing. Sarmiento opposes what is essentially American in order to inculcate—with blood and fire, just as the conquistadors had tried to do—alien formulas here. Martí defends the autochthonous, the genuinely American. This does not mean, of course, that he foolishly rejected whatever positive elements might be offered by other realities: "Graft the world onto our republics," he said, "but the trunk must be that of our republics." Sarmiento also sought to graft the world onto our republics, but he would have their trunks uprooted in the process. For that reason, if the continuators of Martí are found in Mella and Vallejo, Fidel and Che, and in the new culture of revolutionary Latin America, the heirs of Sarmiento (in spite of his complexity) are, in the final anal-

ysis, the representatives of the Argentine vice-bourgeoisie. They are, moreover, a defeated class, because the dream of bourgeois development that Sarmiento envisaged was not even a possibility. There was simply no way an eventual Argentine bourgeoisie could develop. Latin America was a late arrival to that fiesta, for as Mariátegui wrote: "The time of free competition in the capitalist economy has come to an end, in all areas and in every aspect. We are now in an era of monopolies, of empires. The Latin-American countries are experiencing a belated entry into competitive capitalism. The dominant positions are already well established. The fate of such countries, within the capitalist order, is that of simple colonies."⁶³

Incorporated into what is called with a bit of unintentional humor the "free world," our countries—in spite of our shields, anthems, flags, and presidents—would inaugurate a new form of not being independent: neocolonialism. The bourgeoisie, for whom Sarmiento had outlined such delightful possibilities, became no more than an vice-bourgeoisie, a modest local shareholder in imperial exploitation—first the English, then the North American.

It is in this light that one sees more clearly the connections between Sarmiento—whose name is associated with grand pedagogical projects, immense spaces, railways, ships—and Borges, the mention of whom evokes mirrors that multiply the same miserable image, unfathomable labyrinths, and a sad, dimly lit library. But apart from this, if the "American-ness" of Sarmiento is always taken for granted (although it is obvious in him, this is not to say he represents the positive pole of that "American-ness"), I have never been able to understand why it is denied to Borges. Borges is a typical colonial writer, the representative among us of a now-powerless class for whom the act of writing—and he is well aware of this, for he is a man of diabolical intelligence—is more like the act of reading. He is not a European writer; there is no European writer like Borges. But there are *many* European writers—from Iceland to the German expressionists—whom Borges has *read*, shuffled together, collated. European writers belong to very concrete and provincial traditions—reaching the extreme case of a Péguy, for example, who boasted of never having read anything but French authors. Apart from a few professors of philology, who receive a salary for it, there is only one type of person who really knows in its entirety the literature of Europe: the colonial. Only in the case of mental imbalance can a learned Argentine writer ever boast of having read nothing but Argentine—or even Spanish-language—authors. And Borges is not imbalanced. On the contrary, he is an extremely lucid man, one who exemplifies Marfí's idea that intelligence is only one—and not necessarily the best—part of a man.

The writing of Borges comes directly from his reading, in a peculiar process of phagocytosis that identifies him clearly as a colonial and the representative of a dying class. For him the creation par excellence of culture is a library; or better yet, a museum—a place where the products of culture from abroad are assem-

bled. A museum of horrors, of monsters, of splendors, of folkloric data and artifacts (those of Argentina seen with the eye of a curator)—the work of Borges, written in a Spanish difficult to read without admiration, is one of the American scandals of our time.

Unlike some other important Latin-American writers, Borges does not pretend to be a leftist. Quite the opposite. His position in this regard leads him to sign a petition in favor of the Bay of Pigs invaders, to call for the death penalty for Debray, or to dedicate a book to Nixon. Many of his admirers who deplore (or say they deplore) these acts maintain that there is a dichotomy in the man that permits him, on the one hand, to write slightly immortal books and, on the other, to sign political declarations that are more puerile than malicious. That may well be. It is also possible that no such dichotomy exists and that we ought to accuse ourselves to restoring unity to the author of "The Garden of Forking Paths." By that I do not propose that we should find errors of spelling or syntax in his elegant pages but rather that we read them for what, in the final analysis, they are: the painful testimony of a class with no way out, diminished to saying in the voice of one man, "The world, unfortunately, is real; I, unfortunately, am Borges."

It is interesting that the writing/reading of Borges is enjoying a particularly favorable reception in capitalist Europe at the moment when Europe is itself becoming a colony in the face of the "American challenge." In a book of that very title, Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber explains with unmasked cynicism, "Now then, Europe is not Algiers or Senegal!"⁶⁴ In other words, the United States cannot do to Europe what Europe did to Algiers and Senegal! I have bad news for Europe: it seems that, in spite of everything, they can indeed do it; they have, in fact, been doing it now for some time. And if this occurs in the area of economics—along with complex political derivations—the European cultural superstructure is also manifesting obvious colonial symptoms. One of them may well be the apogee of Borges's writing/reading.

But of course the heritage of Borges, whose kinship with Sarmiento we have already seen, must be sought above all in Latin America, where it will imply a further decline in impetus and quality. Since this is not a survey, but rather a simple essay on Latin-American culture, I shall restrict myself to a single example. I am aware that it is a very minor one; but it is nonetheless a valid symptom. I shall comment on a small book of criticism by Carlos Fuentes, *La nueva novela hispanoamericana* [The new Spanish-American novel].

As spokesman for the same class as Borges, Fuentes also evinced leftist whims in his younger days. The former's *El tamaño de mi esperanza* [The extent of my hope] corresponds to the latter's *La muerte de Artemio Cruz* [The death of Artemio Cruz]. But to continue judging Fuentes by that book, without question one of our good novels, would be as senseless as continuing to judge Borges by his early book—the difference being that Borges, who is more consistent (and in

all ways more estimable; Borges, even though we differ so greatly from him, is a truly important writer), decided to adopt openly his position as a man of the Right, while Fuentes operates as such but attempts to conserve, from time to time, a leftist terminology that does not lack, of course, references to Marx. In *The Death of Artemio Cruz*, a secretary who is fully integrated into the system synthesizes his biography in the following dialogue:

- "You're very young. How old are you?"
 "Twenty-seven."
 "When did you receive your degree?"
 "Three years ago. But . . ."
 "But what?"
 "Theory and practice are different."
 "And that amuses you?"
 "A lot of Marxism. So much that I even wrote my thesis on surplus value."
 "It ought to be good training, Padilla."
 "But practice is very different."
 "Is that what you are, a Marxist?"
 "Well, all my friends were. It's a stage one goes through."⁶⁵

This dialogue expresses clearly enough the situation of a certain sector of the Mexican intelligentsia that, though it shares Borges's class circumstances and behavior patterns, differs from him for purely local reasons, in certain superficial aspects. I am thinking, specifically, of the so-called Mexican literary mafia, one of whose most conspicuous figures is Carlos Fuentes. This group warmly expressed its sympathy for the Cuban Revolution until, in 1961, the revolution proclaimed itself and proved to be Marxist-Leninist—that is, a revolution that has its forefront a worker-peasant alliance. From that day on, the support of the mafia grew increasingly diluted, up to the last few months when—taking advantage of the wild vociferation occasioned by a Cuban writer's month in jail—they broke obstreperously with Cuba.

The symmetry here is instructive: in 1961, at the time of the Bay of Pigs, the only gathering of Latin-American writers to express in a manifesto its desire that Cuba be defeated by mercenaries in the service of imperialism was a group of Argentines centered around Borges.⁶⁶ Ten years later, in 1971, the only national circle of writers on the continent to exploit an obvious pretext for breaking with Cuba and culminating the conduct of the revolution was the Mexican mafia. It is a simple changing of the guard within an identical attitude.

In that light one can better understand the intentions of Fuentes's short book on the new Spanish-American novel. The development of this new novel is one of the prominent features of the literature of these past few years, and its circu-

lation beyond our borders is in large part owing to the worldwide attention our continent has enjoyed since the triumph of the Cuban Revolution in 1959.⁶⁷

Logically, this new novel has occasioned various interpretations, numerous studies. That of Carlos Fuentes, despite its brevity (less than one hundred pages), comprehends a thoroughgoing position paper on literature and politics that clearly synthesizes a shrewd rightist viewpoint within our countries.

Fuentes is quick to lay his cards on the table. In the first chapter, exemplarily entitled "Civilization and Barbarism," he adopts for openers, as might be expected, the thesis of Sarmiento: during the nineteenth century "it is possible for the only one drama to unfold in this medium: that which Sarmiento established in the subtitle of *Facundo—Civilization and Barbarism*." That drama constitutes the conflict "of the first one hundred years of Latin-American society and its novel."⁶⁸ The narrative corresponding to this conflict comprehends four factors: "an essentially alien [to whom?] natural order," which was "the real Latin-American protagonist"; the dictator on the national or regional scale; the exploited masses; and the fourth factor, "the writer, *who invariably stands on the side of civilization and against barbarism*" (11-12; my emphasis). This, according to Fuentes, implies "a defense of the exploited," but Sarmiento revealed what it consisted of in fact. The polarity that characterized the 1900s, he continued, does not go unchanged in the following century. "In the twentieth century the intellectual himself is forced to struggle within a society that is, internally and externally, much more complex," a complexity owing to the fact that these countries will be penetrated by imperialism, while sometime later there will take place "a revolt and upsurge . . . in the underdeveloped world." Among the international factors that must be taken into account in the twentieth century, socialism, is one that Fuentes forgets to include. But he slips in this opportune formula: "We have the beginning of the transition from epic simplism to dialectical complexity" (13). "Epic simplism" was the nineteenth-century struggle in which, according to Fuentes, "the writer [he means writers *like him*] invariably stands on the side of civilization and against barbarism," that is, becomes an unconditional servant of the new oligarchy and a harsh enemy of the American masses. "Dialectical complexity" is the form that collaboration takes in the twentieth century, when the oligarchy in question has revealed itself as a mere intermediary for imperialist interests and "the writer" such as Fuentes must now serve two masters. Even when it is a question of such well-heeled masters, we have known since the Holy Scriptures that this does imply a certain "dialectical complexity," especially when one attempts to make everyone believe one is in fact serving a third master—the people. Notwithstanding its slight omissions, the synthesis offered by the lucid Fuentes of one aspect of imperialist penetration in our countries is interesting. He writes:

In order to intervene effectively in the economic life of each

Latin-American country, it requires not only an intermediary ruling class, but a whole array of services in public administration, commerce, publicity, business management, extractive and refining industries, banking, transportation, and even entertainment: bread and circuses. General Motors assembles automobiles, takes home profits, and sponsors television programs. [14].

As a final example (even though that of General Motors is always valid) it might have been more useful to mention the CIA, which organizes the Bay of Pigs invasion and pays, via transparent intermediaries, for the review *Mundo nuevo*, one of whose principal ideologues was none other than Carlos Fuentes.

With these political premises established, Fuentes goes on to postulate certain literary premises before concentrating on the authors he will study (Vargas Llosa, Carpentier, García Márquez, Cortázar, and Goytisolo) and concluding with more observations of a political nature. I am not interested in lingering over his criticism per se but simply in underscoring a few of its ideological lines, which are, in any case, apparent: at times, this little book seems a thoroughgoing ideological manifest.

A critical appreciation of literature requires that we start off with a concept of criticism itself; one ought to have answered the elemental question, What is criticism? The modest opinion of Krystina Pomorska would seem acceptable. According to Tzvetan Todorov,

... she defends the following thesis: every critical method is a generalization upon the literary practice of its time. Critical methods in the period of classicism were elaborated as a function of classical literary works. The criticism of the romantics reiterates the principles (the irrational, the psychological, etc.) of romanticism itself.⁶⁹

Reading Fuentes's criticism on the new Spanish-American novel, then, we are aware that his "critical method is a generalization upon the literary practice of its time"—the practice of *other* literatures, that is, *not* the Spanish-American. All things considered, this fits in perfectly with the alienated and alienating ideology of Fuentes.

After the work of men like Alejo Carpentier, whom some profiteers of the "boom" have tried in vain to disclaim, the undertaking assumed by the new Spanish-American novel—an undertaking that, as certain critics do not cease to observe, might appear accomplished by now or "surpassed" in the narrative of capitalist countries—implies a reinterpretation of our history. Indifferent to this incontestable fact—which in many cases bears an ostensible relationship to the new perspectives the revolution has afforded our America and which is in no small way responsible for the diffusion of our narrative among those with a desire to know the continent about which there is so much discussion—Fuentes dissi-

pates the flesh and blood of our novels, the criticism of which would require, before anything else, understanding and evaluation of the vision of history presented in them, and, as I have said, calmly applies to the schemes derived from other literatures (those of capitalist countries), now reduced to mere linguistic speculations.

The extraordinary vogue enjoyed by linguistics in recent years has moved more than one person to conclude that "the twentieth century, which is the century of so many things, would seem to be above all the century of linguistics."⁷⁰ We, in contrast, would say that, among those "many things," the establishment of socialist governments and decolonization carry much more weight as outstanding features of this century. I might add as a modest personal example of this vogue that as recently as 1955, when I was a student of linguistics under André Martinet, linguistic matters were confined in Paris to university lecture halls. Outside the classroom we talked with our friends about literature, philosophy, and politics. Only a few years later, linguistics—whose structuralist dimension, as Lévi-Strauss described it, encompasses the other social sciences—was in Paris the obligatory theme of all discussions. In those days literature, philosophy, and politics all ran afoul of structuralists. (I am speaking of some years ago; presently, structuralism seems to be on the decline. However, in our part of the world the insistence on such an ideology will last for sometime yet.)

Now I have no doubt that there exist specifically scientific factors to which we can credit this vogue of linguistics. But I also know that there are *ideological* reasons for it over and above the subject matter itself. With respect to literary studies it is not difficult to determine these ideological reasons. Indeed, the virtues and limitations of critical strategies ranging from Russian formalism to French structuralism cannot be shown without them. And among them is the attempt at ahistorization peculiar to a dying class: a class that initiated its trajectory with daring *utopias* in order to chase away time and that endeavors now, in the face of adversity, to arrest that trajectory via impossible *uchronics*. In any case, one must recognize the convergence between these studies and their respective contemporaneous literature. However, when Fuentes glosses over the concrete reality of the current Spanish-American novel and attempts to impose upon it systems derived from other literatures and other critical methodologies, he adds—with a typically colonial attitude—a second level of idealization to his critical outlook. In a word, this is summed up in his claim that our present-day narrative—*like that of apparently coetaneous capitalist countries*—is above all a feat of language. Such a contention, among other things, allows him to minimize nicely everything in that narrative having to do with a clear historical concretion. Furthermore, the manner in which he lays the foundations of his linguistic approach demonstrates a pedantry and a provincialism typical of the colonial wishing to demonstrate to those in the metropolis that he too is capable of grappling with fashionable themes namely, themes *from abroad*—and wishing at the same time

to enlighten his fellow countrymen, in whom he is confident of finding an ignorance even greater than his own. This is the sort of thing he spews forth:

Change comprehends the categories of process and speech, of diachrony; structure comprehends those of system and language, of synchrony. The point of interaction for all these categories is the word—which joins diachrony and synchrony, speech and language through discourse; along with process and system, through the event, and even event and discourse themselves. [33]

These banalities (which any handy little linguistics manual could have taken care of), nonetheless should arouse in us more than a smile. Fuentes is elaborating as best he can here a consistent vision of our literature, of our culture—a vision that, significantly, coincides in its essentials with that proposed by writers like Emir Rodríguez Monegal and Severo Sarduy.

It is revealing that for Fuentes the thesis of the preponderant role of language in the new Spanish-American novel finds its basis in the prose of Borges, "without which there would simply not exist a modern Spanish-American novel," since, according to Fuentes, "the ultimate significance" of that prose is "to bear witness, first off, that Latin America is lacking a language and must therefore establish one." This singular triumph is achieved by Borges, Fuentes continued, "in his creation of a new Latin-American language, which, by pure contrast, reveals the lie, the acquiescence and the duplicity, of what has traditionally passed for 'language' among us" (26).

Naturally, based on such criteria the ahistorization of literature can attain truly delicious expressions. We learn, for example, that Witold Gombrowicz's *Pornography*

could have been related by a native of the Amazon jungles and that neither nationality nor social class, in the final analysis, explain the difference between Gombrowicz and the possible narrator of the same initiation myth in a Brazilian jungle. Rather, it is explained precisely by the possibility of combining discourse in different ways. Only on the basis of the universality of linguistic structures can there be conceded, a posteriori, the peripheral data regarding nationality and class. [22]

And consequently, we are told as well that "it is closer to the truth, in the first instance, to understand the conflict in Spanish-American literature as related to certain characteristics of the literary endeavor" (24; my emphasis), rather than to history; furthermore:

The old obligation to denounce is transformed into a *much more arduous* enterprise: the critical elaboration of everything that has gone unspeakable in our long history of lies, silences, rhetoric, and academic

complicities. *To invent a language is to articulate all that history has concealed.* [30; my emphasis]

Such an interpretation, then, allows Fuentes to have his cake and eat it too. Thus conceived, literature not only withdraws from any combatant role (here degraded by a clever adjective: "the old obligation to denounce"), but its withdrawal, far from being a retreat, becomes a "*much more arduous* enterprise," since it is to articulate no less than "*all that history has concealed.*" Further on we are told that our true language is in the process of being discovered and created and that "in the very act of discovery and creation it threatens, *in a revolutionary way*, the whole economic, political, and social structure erected upon a vertically false language" (94-95; my emphasis).

This shrewd, while at the same time superficial, manner of expounding right-wing concerns in left-wing terminology reminds us—though it is difficult to forget for a single moment—that Fuentes is a member of the Mexican literary mafia, the qualities of which he has attempted to extend beyond the borders of his country.

Furthermore, that these arguments constitute the projection onto literary questions of an inherently reactionary political platform is not conjecture. This is said throughout the little book and is particularly explicit in its final pages. Besides the well-known attacks on socialism, there are observations like this one: "Perhaps the sad, immediate future of Latin America will see fascist populism, a Peronist sort of dictatorship, capable of carrying out various reforms only in exchange for a suppression of revolutionary impulse and civil liberties" (96). The "civilization vs. barbarism" thesis appears not to have changed in the least. But in fact it has—it has been aggravated by the devastating presence of imperialism in our countries. In response to this reality, Fuentes erects a scarecrow: the announcement that there is opening before us

a prospect even more grave. That is, in proportion to the widening of the abyss between the geometric expansion of the technocratic world and the arithmetic expansion of our own ancillary societies, Latin America is being transformed into a world that is *superfluous* [Fuentes's emphasis] to imperialism. Traditionally we have been exploited countries. *Soon we will not even be that* [my emphasis]. It will no longer be necessary to exploit us, for technology will have succeeded in—to a large extent it can already—manufacturing substitutes for our single-product offerings. [96]

In light of this, and recalling that for Fuentes the revolution has no prospects in Latin America—he insists upon the impossibility of a "second Cuba" (96) and cannot accept the varied, unpredictable forms the process will assume—we should almost be thankful that we are not "*superfluous*" to imperialist technol-

ogy, that it is not manufacturing substitutes (as "it can already") for our poor products.

I have lingered perhaps longer than necessary on Fuentes because he is one of the most outstanding figures among the new Latin-American writers who have set out to elaborate in the cultural sphere a counterrevolutionary platform that, at least on the surface, goes beyond the coarse simplifications of the program "Appointment with Cuba," broadcast by the Voice of (the United States of) America. But the writers in question already had an adequate medium: the review *Mundo Nuevo* [New World], financed by the CIA,⁷¹ whose ideological foundations are summed up by Fuentes's short book in a manner that the professorial weightiness of Emir Rodríguez Monegal or the neo-Barthean flutterings of Severo Sarduy — the magazine's other two "critics" — would have found difficult to achieve. That publication, which also gathered together the likes of Guillermo Cabrera Infante and Juan Goytisolo, is to be replaced shortly by another, which will apparently rely upon more or less the same team, along with a few additions. I am speaking of the review *Libre* [Free]. A fusion of the two titles speaks for itself: *Mundo Libre* [Free World].

The Future Begun

The endeavor to include ourselves in the "free world" — the hilarious name that capitalist countries today apply to themselves and bestow in passing on their oppressed colonies and neo-colonies — is a modern version of the nineteenth-century attempt by Creole exploiting classes to subject us to a supposed "civilization"; and this latter, in its turn, is a repetition of the designs of European conquistadors. In all these cases, with only slight variations, it is plain that Latin America does not exist except, at the very most, as a *resistance* that must be overcome in order to implant *true* culture, that of "the modern peoples who gratify themselves with the epithet of civilized."⁷² Pareto's words here recall so well those of Martí, who wrote in 1883 of civilization as "the vulgar name under which contemporary European man operates."

In the face of what the conquistadores, the Creole oligarchs, and the imperialists and their flunkies have attempted, our culture — taking this term in its broad historical and anthropological sense — has been in a constant process of formation: our authentic culture, the culture created by the mestizo populace, those descendants of Indians and blacks and Europeans whom Bolívar and Artigas led so well; the culture of the exploited classes, of the radical petite bourgeoisie of José Martí, of the poor peasantry of Emiliano Zapata, of the working class of Luis Emilio Recabarren and Jesús Menéndez; the culture "of the hungry Indian masses, of the landless peasants, of the exploited workers" mentioned in the *Second Declaration of Havana* (1962), "of the honest and brilliant intellectuals who

abound in our suffering Latin-American countries"; the culture of a people that now encompasses "a family numbering two hundred million brothers" and that "has said: Enough! and has begun to move."

That culture — like every living culture, especially at its dawn — is on the move. It has, of course, its own distinguishing characteristics, even though it was born — like every culture, although in this case in a particularly planetary way — of a synthesis. And it does not limit itself in the least to a mere repetition of the elements that formed it. This is something that the Mexican Alfonso Reyes, though he directed his attention to Europe more often than we would have wished, has underscored well. On speaking with another Latin American about the characterization of our culture as one of synthesis, he says:

Neither he nor I were understood by our European colleagues, who thought we were referring to the *résumé* or elemental compendium of the European conquests. According to such a facile interpretation, the synthesis would be a terminal point. But that is not the case: here the synthesis is the new point of departure, a structure composed of prior and dispersed elements that — like all structures — transcends them and contains in itself new qualities. H₂O is not only a union of hydrogen and oxygen; it is, moreover, water.⁷³

This is especially apparent if we consider that the "water" in question is formed not only from European elements, which are those Reyes emphasizes, but also from the indigenous and the African. But even with his limitations, it is still within Reyes's capacity to state at the end of that piece:

I say now before the tribunal of international thinkers within reach of my voice: we recognize the right to universal citizenship which we have won. We have arrived at our majority. Very soon you will become used to reckoning with us.⁷⁴

These words were spoken in 1936. Today that "very soon" has already arrived. If we were asked to indicate the date that separates Reyes's hope from our certainty — considering the usual difficulties in that sort of thing — I would say 1959, the year the Cuban Revolution triumphed. One could also go along marking some of the dates that are milestones in the advent of that culture. The first, relating to the indigenous peoples' resistance and black slave revolts against European oppression, are imprecise. The year 1780 is important: it marks the uprising of Túpac Amaru in Peru. In 1803, the independence of Haiti. In 1810, the beginning of revolutionary movements in various Spanish colonies in America — movements extending well into the century. In 1867, the victory of Juárez over Maximilian. In 1895, the beginning of the final stage of Cuba's war against Spain — a war that Martí foresaw as an action against emerging Yankee imperialism. In 1910, the Mexican Revolution. In the 1920s and 1930s, Sandino's re-

stance in Nicaragua and the establishment on the continent of the working class as a vanguard force. In 1938, the nationalization of Mexican petroleum by Cárdenas. In 1944, the coming to power of a democratic regime in Guatemala, which was to be radicalized in office. In 1946, the beginning of Juan Domingo Perón's presidency in Argentina, under which the "shirtless ones" would become an influential force. In 1952, the Bolivian revolution. In 1959, the triumph of the Cuban Revolution. In 1961, the Bay of Pigs: the first military defeat of Yankee imperialism in America, and the declaration of our revolution as Marxist-Leninist. In 1967, the fall of Che Guevara while leading a nascent Latin-American army in Bolivia. In 1970, the election of socialist president Salvador Allende in Chile.

These dates, seen superficially, might not appear to have a very direct relationship to our culture. But, in fact, the opposite is true. Our culture is—and can only be—the child of revolution, of our multisectional rejection of all colonialisms. Our culture, like every culture, requires as a primary condition our own existence. I cannot help but cite here, although I have done so before elsewhere, one of the occasions on which Martí spoke to this fact in the most simple and illuminating way. "Letters, which are expression, cannot exist," he wrote in 1881, "so long as there is no essence to express in them. Nor will there exist a Spanish-American literature until Spanish America exists." And further: "Let us lament now that we are without a great work of art; not because we do not have that work but because it is a sign that we are still without a great people that would be reflected in it."⁷⁵ Latin-American culture, then, has become a possibility in the first place because of the many who have struggled, the many who still struggle, for the existence of that "great people" that in 1881, Martí still referred to as Spanish America but that some years later he would prefer to name, more accurately, "Our America."

But this is not, of course, the only culture forged here. There is also the culture of anti-America, that of the oppressors, of those who tried (or are trying) to impose on these lands metropolitan schemes, or simply, tamely to reproduce in a provincial fashion what might have authenticity in other countries. In the best of cases, to repeat, it is a question of the influence of

those who have worked, in some cases patriotically, to shape social life in accordance with models of other highly developed countries, whose practices are the result of an organic process over the course of centuries [and thus] have betrayed the cause of the true emancipation of Latin America.⁷⁶

This anti-America culture is still very visible. It is still proclaimed and perpetuated in structures, works, ephemerides. But without a doubt, it is suffering the pangs of death, just like the system upon which it is based. We can and must contribute to a true assessment of the history of the oppressors and that of the

oppressed. But of course, the triumph of the latter will be the work, above all, of those for whom history is a function not of erudition but of deeds. It is they who will achieve the definitive triumph of the true America, reestablishing—this time in a different light—the unity of our immense continent. "Spanish America, Latin America—call it what you wish," wrote Mariátegui,

will not find its unity in the bourgeois order. That order divides us, perforce, into petty nationalisms. It is for Anglo-Saxon North America to consummate and draw to a close capitalist civilization. The future of Latin America is socialist.⁷⁷

Such a future, which has already begun, will end by rendering incomprehensible the idle question about our existence.

And Ariel Now?

The Ariel of Shakespeare's great myth, which we have been following in these notes, is, as has been said, the intellectual from the same island as Caliban.⁷⁸ He can choose between serving Prospero—the case with intellectuals of the anti-American persuasion—at which he is apparently unusually adept but for whom he is nothing more than a timorous slave, or allying himself with Caliban in his struggle for true freedom. It could be said that I am thinking, in Gramscian terms, above all of the "traditional" intellectuals: those whom the proletariat, even during the period of transition, must assimilate in the greatest possible number while it generates its own "organic" intellectuals.

It is common knowledge, of course, that a more or less important segment of intellectuals at the service of the exploited classes usually comes from the exploiting classes, with which they have broken radically. This is the classic, to say the least, case of such supreme figures as Marx, Engels, and Lenin. The fact had been observed already in *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) itself, where Marx and Engels wrote:

In times when the class struggle nears the decisive hour, the process of dissolution going on within the ruling class, in fact, within the whole range of old society, assumes such a violent, glaring character, that a small section of the ruling class cuts itself adrift and joins the revolutionary class, the class that holds the future in its hands . . . [S]o now a portion of the bourgeoisie goes over to the proletariat and, in particular, a portion of the bourgeois ideologists, who have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole.⁷⁹

If this is obviously valid with regard to the most highly developed capitalist nations—the ones Marx and Engels had in mind in the *Manifesto*—something

more must be added in the case of our countries. Here that "portion of the bourgeois ideologists" to which Marx and Engels refer experiences a second form of rupture: except for that sector proceeding organically from the exploited classes, the intelligentsia that considers itself revolutionary must break all ties with its class of origin (frequently the *petite bourgeoisie*) and must besides sever the nexus of *dependence* upon the metropolitan culture from which it has learned, nonetheless, a language as well as a conceptual and technical apparatus.⁸⁰ That language will be of profit, to use Shakespearean terminology, in cursing Prospero. Such was the case with José María Heredia, who exclaimed in the finest Spanish of the first third of the nineteenth century, "The vilest of traitors might serve him./ But the tyrant's passion is all in vain./ For the sea's immense and rolling waves/ Span the distance from Cuba to Spain." It was also the case of José Martí. After spending fifteen years in the United States—which would allow him to become completely familiar with modernity and to detect within that country the emergence of North American imperialism—he wrote: "I have lived in the monster, and I know its entrails; and my sling is the sling of David." While I can foresee that my suggestion that Heredia and Martí went about cursing will have an unpleasant ring in the ears of some, I wish to remind them that "vile traitors" and "monster" do have something to do with curses. Both Shakespeare and reality would appear to argue well against their objection. And Heredia and Martí are only archetypal examples. More recently we have not been lacking either in individuals who attribute the volcanic violence in some of Fidel's recent speeches to deformations—Caliban, let us not forget, is always seen as deformed by the hostile eye—in our revolution. Response to his address at the first National Congress on Education and Culture is one example of this. That some of those shocked should have praised Fanon (others, perhaps had never heard of him, since they have as much to do with politics, in the words of Rodolfo Walsh, as with astrophysics), and now attribute an attitude that is at the very root of our historical being to a deformation or to foreign influence, might be a sign of any number of things—among them, total incoherence. It might also be a question of total ignorance, if not disdain, regarding our concrete realities, past and present. This, most assuredly, does not qualify them to have very much to do with our future.

The situation and tasks of the intellectual in the service of the exploited classes differ, of course, depending upon whether it is a question of a country where the revolution has yet to triumph or one where the revolution is already underway. And, as we have recalled above, the term "intellectual" is broad enough to counter any attempts at simplification. The intellectual can be a theoretician and leader like Mariátegui or Mella; a scholar, like Fernando Ortiz; or a writer like César Vallejo. In all these cases their concrete example is more instructive than any vague generalization.⁸¹

The situation, as I said, is different in countries where the Latin-American masses have at last achieved power and set in motion a socialist revolution. The

encouraging case of Chile is too immediate to allow for any conclusions to be drawn. But the socialist revolution in Cuba is more than twelve years old, and by this time it is possible to point out certain facts—although, owing to the nature of this essay, I propose to mention here only a few salient characteristics.

This revolution—in both practice and theory absolutely faithful to the most exacting popular Latin-American tradition—has satisfied in full the aspiration of Mariátegui. "We certainly do not wish for socialism in Latin America to be a carbon copy," he said. "It must be a heroic creation. With our own reality, in our own language, we must give life to Indo-American socialism."⁸²

That is why our revolution cannot be understood without a knowledge of "our own reality," "our own language," and to these I have referred extensively. But the unavoidable pride in having inherited the best of Latin-American history, in struggling in the front ranks of a family numbering 200 million brothers and sisters, must not cause us to forget that as a consequence we form part of another even larger vanguard, a planetary vanguard—that of the socialist countries emerging on every continent. This means that our inheritance is also the worldwide inheritance of socialism and that we commit ourselves to it as the most beautiful, the most lofty, the most combative chapter in the history of humanity. We feel as unequivocally our own socialism's past: from the dreams of the utopian socialists to the impassioned scientific rigor of Marx ("That German of tender spirit and iron hand," as Martí said) and Engels, from the heroic endeavor of the Paris Commune of a century ago to the startling triumph of the October Revolution and the abiding example of Lenin, from the establishment of new socialist governments in Europe as a result of the defeat of fascism in World War II to the success of socialist revolutions in such "underdeveloped" Asian countries as China, Korea, and Vietnam. When we affirm our commitment to such a magnificent inheritance—one that we aspire besides to enrich with our own contributions—we are well aware that this quite naturally entails shining moments as well as difficult ones, achievements as well as errors. How could we not be aware of this when on making *our own* history (an operation that has nothing to do with *reading* the history of others), we find ourselves also subject to achievements and errors, just as all *real* historical movements have been and will continue to be!

This elemental fact is constantly being recalled, not only by our declared enemies but even by some supposed friends, whose only apparent objection to socialism is, at bottom, that it exists—in all its grandeur and with its difficulties, in spite of the flawlessness with which this written swan appears in books. We cannot but ask ourselves why we should go on offering explanations to those supposed friends about the problems we face in *real-life* socialist construction, especially when their consciences allow them to remain integrated into exploiting societies or, in some cases, even to abandon our neocolonial countries and request, hat in hand, a place in those very societies. No, there is no reason to give any explanation to that sort of people, who, were they honest, should be con-

cerned about having so much in common with our enemies. The frivolous way in which some intellectuals who call themselves leftists (and who, nonetheless, don't seem to give a damn about the masses) rush forth shamelessly to repeat word for word the same critiques of the socialist world proposed and promulgated by capitalism only demonstrates that they have not broken with capitalism as radically as they might perhaps think. The natural consequence of this attitude is that under the guise of rejecting error (something upon which any opposing factions can come to an agreement), socialism as a whole, reduced arbitrarily to such errors, is rejected in passing; or there is the deformation and generalization of a concrete historical moment and, extracting it from its context, the attempt to apply it to other historical moments that have *their own characteristics, their own virtues, and their own defects*. This is one of the many things that, in Cuba, we have learned in the flesh.

During these years, in search of original and above all *genuine* solutions to our problems, an extensive dialogue on cultural questions has taken place in Cuba. *Casa de las Américas*, in particular, has published a number of contributions to the dialogue. I am thinking particularly of the round table in which I participated, with a group of colleagues, in 1969.⁸³

And, of course, the leaders of the revolution themselves have not been remiss in expressing opinions on these matters. Even though, as Fidel has said, "we did not have our Yenan Conference" before the triumph of the revolution,⁸⁴ since that time discussions, meetings, and congresses designed to grapple with these questions have taken place. I shall limit myself to recalling a few of the many texts by Fidel and Che. Regarding the former, there is his speech at the National Library of 30 June 1961, published that year and known since then as *Words to the Intellectuals*; his speech of 13 March 1969 in which he dealt with the democratization of the university and to which we referred a number of times in the above-mentioned round table; and finally, his contribution to the recent Congress on Education and Culture, which we published, together with the declaration of the congress, in number 65-66 of *Casa de las Américas*. Of course, these are not by any means the only occasions on which Fidel has taken up cultural problems, but I think they offer a sufficiently clear picture of the revolution's pertinent criteria.

Although a decade has passed between the first of these speeches—which I am convinced has scarcely been read by many of its commentators, who limit themselves to quoting the odd sentence or two out of context—and the most recent one, what an *authentic* reading of both demonstrates above all is a consistency over the ten-year period. In 1971, Fidel has this to say about literary and other artistic works:

We, a revolutionary people, value cultural and artistic creations in proportion to what they offer mankind, in proportion to their

contribution to the revindication of man, the liberation of man, the happiness of man . . . Our evaluation is political. There can be no aesthetic value in opposition to man. Aesthetic value cannot exist in opposition to justice, in opposition to the welfare or in opposition to the happiness of man. It cannot exist!

In 1961, he had declared:

It is man himself, his fellow man, the redemption of his fellow man that constitutes the objective of the revolutionary. If they ask us revolutionaries what matters most to us, we say the people, and we will always say the people. The people in the truest sense, that is, the majority of the people, those who have had to live in exploitation and in the cruelest neglect. Our basic concern will always be the great majority of the people, that is, the oppressed and exploited classes. The prism through which we see everything is this: whatever is good for them will be good for us; whatever is noble, useful, and beautiful for them will be noble, useful, and beautiful for us.

And those words of 1961, so often cited out of context, must be returned to that context for a full understanding of their meaning:

Within the revolution, everything; outside the revolution, nothing.

Outside the revolution, nothing, because the revolution also has its rights; and the first right of the revolution is to be, to exist. No one, to the extent that the revolution understands the interests of the people, to the extent that the revolution expresses the interest of the nation as a whole, can maintain any right in opposition to it.

But consistency is not repetition. The correspondence between the two speeches does not mean that the past ten years have gone by in vain. At the beginning of his *Words to the Intellectuals* Fidel had recalled that the economic and social revolution taking place in Cuba was bound inevitably to produce in its turn a revolution in the culture of our country. The decisions proclaimed in the 1969 speech on the democratization of the university along with those of the 1971 speech at the National Congress on Education and Culture correspond, among other things, to the very transformation mentioned already in 1961 as an outcome of the economic and social revolution. During those ten years there has been taking place an uninterrupted radicalization of the revolution, which implies a growing participation of the masses in the country's destiny. If the agrarian reform of 1959 will be followed by an agrarian revolution, the literacy campaign will inspire a campaign for follow-up courses, and the later announcement of the democratization of the university already supposes that the masses have conquered the domains of so-called high culture. Meanwhile, in a parallel way, the process of syn-

dical democratization brings about an inexorable growth in the role played by the working class in the life of the country.

In 1961 this could not yet have been the case. In that year the literacy campaign was only just being carried out. The foundations of a truly new culture were barely being laid. By now, 1971, a great step forward has been taken in the development of that culture; a step already foreseen in 1961, one involving tasks that must inevitably be accomplished by any revolution that calls itself socialist: the extension of education to all of the people, its firm grounding in revolutionary principles, and the construction and safeguarding of a new, socialist culture.

To better understand the goals as well as the specific characteristics of our developing cultural transformation, it is useful to compare it to similar processes in other socialist countries. The creation of conditions by which an entire people who have lived in exploitation and illiteracy gains access to the highest levels of knowledge and creativity is one of the most beautiful achievements of a revolution.

Cultural questions also engaged a good part of Ernesto Che Guevara's attention. His study, *El socialismo y el hombre en Cuba* [Man and Socialism in Cuba], is sufficiently well known to make comment on it unnecessary here. But the reader should be warned, above all, against following the example of those who take him a la carte, selecting, for example, his censure of a certain conception of a socialist realism but not his censure of decadent art under modern capitalism and its continuation in our society—or vice versa.⁸⁵ Or who forget with what astonishing clarity he foresaw certain problems of our artistic life, expressing himself in terms that on being taken up again by pens less prestigious than his own, would raise objections no one dared make to Che himself.

Because it is less known than *Man and Socialism in Cuba*, I would like to close by citing at some length the end of a speech delivered by Che at the University of Las Villas on 28 December 1959, that is, at the very beginning of our revolution. The university had made him professor *honoris causa* in the School of Pedagogy, and Che's speech was to express his gratitude for the distinction. He did so, but what he did above all was to propose to the university, to its professors and students, a transformation that all of them—and us—would have to undergo in order to be considered truly revolutionary, truly useful:

I would never think of demanding that the distinguished professors or the students presently associated with the University of Las Villas perform the miracle of admitting to the university the masses of workers and peasants. The road here is long; it is a process all of you have lived through, one entailing many years of preparatory study. What I do ask, based on my own limited experience as a revolutionary and rebel commandante, is that the present students of the University of Las Villas understand that study is the patrimony of no one and that the place of study where you carry out your work is the patrimony of no one—it

belongs to all the people of Cuba, and it must be extended to the people or the people will seize it. And I would hope—because I began the whole series of ups and downs in my career as a university student, as a member of the middle class, as a doctor with middle-class perspectives and the same youthful aspirations that you must have, and because I have changed in the course of the struggle, because I am convinced of the overwhelming necessity of the revolution and the infinite justice of the people's cause—I would hope for those reasons that you, today proprietors of the university, will extend it to the people. I do not say this as a threat, so as to avoid its being taken over by them tomorrow. I say it simply because it would be one more among so many beautiful examples in Cuba today: that the proprietors of the Central University of Las Villas, the students, offer it to the people through their revolutionary government. And to the distinguished professors, my colleagues, I have to say something similar: become black, mulatto, a worker, a peasant; go down among the people, respond to the people, that is, to all the necessities of all of Cuba. When this is accomplished, no one will be the loser; we all will have gained, and Cuba can then continue its march toward the future with a more vigorous step, and you will not need to include in your cloister this doctor, commandante, bank president, and today professor of pedagogy who now takes leave of you.⁸⁶

That is to say, Che proposed that the "European university," as Martí would have said, yield before the "American university." He proposed to Ariel, through his own most luminous and sublime example if ever there was one, that he seek from Caliban the honor of a place in his rebellious and glorious ranks.

—Havana, 7–20 June 1971

—Translated by Lynn Garafola,
David Arthur McMurray, and Roberto Márquez

I have allowed myself this grand reminder in the face of a rather small fact: my essay, "Caliban," soon will turn fifteen. Since it was first published in the pages of the Cuban journal *Casa de las Américas* (no. 68, September—October 1971), it has gone through numerous editions both in its original language and in translation. It has also been the object of not a few commentaries. The diverse nature of the latter and the fact that the former is again seeing the light of day a decade and a half after its birth, leads me to visit it once more. I still feel grateful for some of those commentaries. Others, as is often the case, I consider mistaken. But what I find most striking is that, torn from its context, with the best of intentions in some instances and the worst in others, my own essay has at times seemed to me virtually unrecognizable. Unless it is restored to the context in which it was written, it runs the risk of turning into gibberish. This is why I have no choice but to recall, albeit in general terms, the circumstance of its birth. I shall try to do so.

I'm not much given to the division of history into decades, which English-speaking people so love, but at times it seems inevitable, just as the division into centuries is inevitable. The trouble is that we might take such divisions too seriously and imagine, for example, that on 1 January 1900 or 1 January 2000 something definitively new began or will begin. Nonetheless, with all due caution, both decades and centuries can have their uses. I would like, as a case in point, to call attention to a noteworthy book, *The 60s Without Apology*.³

Armed with these precautions, it would be well to bear in mind that "Caliban" came out in 1971: at the juncture between the sixties, which had just ended, and the seventies, which had just begun. I wish to evoke the earlier of the two decades, as in the aforementioned book, without apology—and without nostalgia, either, because there will always be new and necessary battles. It was a beautiful moment when intellectual life in many countries was under the hegemony of the Left: just as, the moment when I am writing, it is in not a few capitalist countries, regrettably under the hegemony of the Right. It is no accident that in many of those countries there is talk of a new Right, while in others, a similar situation takes the form of an apparent depoliticization. All the more reason, I might add, to hold in esteem those who, in these circumstances, bravely hold to their positions. The beautiful Sandinista Revolution of Nicaragua, when it triumphed in 1979, did so in this atmosphere, which, nonetheless, will not hinder the forces of democracy from preventing an act of direct imperialist aggression against the homeland of Rubén Darío.

The year before the decade of the sixties began, the Cuban Revolution had taken power. Its repercussions are far from having been dissipated, but they were felt especially strongly in that decade. And the sixties witnessed, among other things, the triumph of the Algerian Revolution and the dramatic Vietnam War, which would come to an end considerably later: these are events that would strongly influence the respective metropolises. The Right saw movements of op-

Nineteen eighty-five was the 240th anniversary of Jonathan Swift's death. There are those who have said that he died an idiot or, at very least, afflicted with a severe psychic disorder. I don't know if this is so; reading biographies and histories of people and things familiar to me has made me suspect what some people have said about them. In any event, it was surely prior to that supposed disorder that he wrote his superb and well-known epitaph, which begins, "Fit ubi saeva indignatio ulterius cor lacerari nequit," and concludes, "Abi, viator, et imitare, si poteris, strenuum pro virili libertatis vindicatorem." Thus, in 1745, he departed to a place where savage indignation could no longer wound the heart of a man who justly considered himself worthy of daring the traveler to emulate, if at all possible, his labors in the cause of human liberty. Swift performed this task in a variegated and mordant literary oeuvre that is read today far less than it deserves—with a single exception, *Gulliver's Travels* (1726).¹ This book is also a tremendous lesson to writers, for the ardent pamphleteer who earned the praise of men whom I admire—such as George Bernard Shaw and Bertolt Brecht—who tirelessly played humanity's foibles, has gone down in history as a harmless teller of children's tales.² His tiger, not unworthy of Blake's, has been turned into a meek tabby for the delight of tiny readers. And yet that book was born of the author's savage indignation, as was nearly everything he wrote. Unexpectedly, he teaches us an important lesson with this metamorphosis. It isn't a new lesson, much less a unique one, but in his case it takes on a shattering dimension: a text, beyond not merely the author's intent (which often is unknowable) but his context as well, can turn into something quite different from what it was, from what it is.

pressed "races" and communities, of women, of marginal peoples, develop before their very eyes. There was, naturally, no lack of absurdity, like the hippies and flower power. In our America, the certainty of victory of guerrilla movements of broadly socialist orientation took root in many hearts and became incarnate in innumerable acts of heroism. Many figures remained as milestones along the road of these hopes, the most heraldic of which, no doubt, is Che. In our America, too, literature, lead but not overwhelmed by the novel, stood at the foreground of the world stage, followed in close proximity by the new cinema and music. At the dawn of the next decade, in 1970, the socialist Salvador Allende was elected president of Chile.

Of course imperialism was not (and never is) an idle spectator. While politically it undertook a variety of operations—ranging from aggression against Cuba to the occupation of the Dominican Republic, from the organization of counterinsurgency and the establishment of new tyrannies to the Alliance for Progress—intellectually it plotted an academic version of its denagogic policy. (At the time of the Second World War, this version was graphically exemplified by a well-known Walt Disney movie, in homage to that movie, this version might have been called *Saludos, amigos escritores y artistas latinoamericanos* [Greetings, Latin-American Writer and Artist Friends].) Grants proliferated, colloquiums flourished, chairs to study and dissect us sprouted like toadstools after a rainstorm. There was even talk, in the most wretched stock-market taste, of the "boom" of the Latin-American novel. It would be unjust to attribute all this to malevolence; many Western intellectuals and institutions evinced a serious attitude toward the emerging realities of what until then had been relegated to the outskirts of history. This new seriousness grew within the framework of real attention to what the French demographer Alfred Sauvy had already, in 1952, baptized "the Third World". The manifest disdain toward 'Third World-ism' being voiced these days in so many openly reactionary quarters (and in others that echo them, as the spectrum slides to the Right) cannot make us forget that concern for colonial and formerly colonial countries implied, and in many instances still implies, a genuine interest without which it is not possible to understand the world we live in today.

At the very outset of the cold war, before the Third World had not entered the ring with such intensity, the United States organized, among other operations, the Congress for Cultural Freedom, in which the crude anti-Communism of practical politicians was adorned with intellectual sighs and breast-beating.⁴ In Spanish, the Congress's journal was called *Cuadernos*; its form was so sclerotic that it was unable to ride the rising tide of the sixties, and thus, it capsized ingloriously on its one hundredth issue. Shortly thereafter, the substitution of *Mundo Nuevo* for *Cuadernos* was planned and accomplished.

The debate that raged around this review permeated the atmosphere in which "Caliban" was conceived. In the mid-sixties, when the imminent publication in

Paris of the new review became known, a group of writers, myself included, called attention to the fact that *Mundo Nuevo* could do nothing more than put a better face on its predecessor and that, in essence, it would have a similar purpose. *Mundo Nuevo* was undoubtedly superior to *Cuadernos*, and it brought in a substantially new team. The project was clear: to challenge, from Europe and with a modern look, the hegemony of the revolutionary outlook in Latin-American intellectual work.⁵ It would be mistaken to contend, and we never suggested, that everyone who published in *Mundo Nuevo* was necessarily hostile to the revolution. On the contrary, the editors' purpose was to create an atmosphere of confusion that would make it difficult to detect the real functions that the review had been assigned. The accusations reached new heights on 27 April 1966, when the *New York Times* published a lengthy article on the CIA's financing of the Congress for Cultural Freedom and its publications. Despite the pharisaic denials issued by the Congress's leadership and some of its contributors, on 14 May 1967, two London newspapers, the *Sunday Times* and the *Observer*, ran detailed reports that definitively clarified the question: the congress's executive secretary, Michael Josselson, admitted everything in Paris. For the *Sunday Times*, it was a "Story of a Literary Bay of Pigs." Among the Spanish-language commentaries on these events, "Epitalio para un imperio cultural" [Epitaph for a Cultural Empire], an article published in the Uruguayan weekly *Marcha* on 27 May of that year by the noted Peruvian writer Mario Vargas Llosa was particularly significant. A few years ago, in 1983, Vargas Llosa (who is now quite far from the Left) published a selection of his articles, entitled *Contra viento y marea (1962-1982)* [Against wind and tide (1962-1982)].⁶ Unfortunately, in that thick book (to which we shall return) Vargas Llosa did not find space for so important an article, which concluded:

The "cultural empire" built with such painstaking cleverness, at such expense, has collapsed like a house of cards, and the pity is that, among its smoking ruins lie, broken, dirtied, guilty and innocent, those who acted in good faith and those who did so in bad faith, those who believed that they were there to fight for freedom and those who solely were interested in picking up their pay.⁷

In its next issue (2 June 1967), *Marcha* published the succinct history, in the form of a chronological tables, of the polemics of the affair, beginning with an exchange of correspondence between the editor of *Mundo Nuevo* and myself (which was given space in a number of periodicals) and following up with further details. But to assume that the "cultural empire" had been overthrown simply because one of its maneuvers had been unmasked is to engage in wishful thinking. *Mundo Nuevo* disappeared after those revelations, but among all sorts of people it sowed seeds of possible distrust toward the Latin-American revolution, which at that time could offer only the victorious example of Cuba, itself virtu-

ally overwhelmed by the diverse (and even contradictory) expectations that many people had of it but limited in actuality by its meager strength and inevitable errors. In 1968 the argument over a literary prize awarded to a book written by the poet Heberto Padilla by the Unión de Escritores y Artistas de Cuba [Association of Cuban Writers and Artists] (which published the book with a prologue expressing its disagreements) gave "those who acted in good faith and those who did so in bad faith" renewed vigor. For three years, the book's author continued to work and write in Cuba. But in 1971 his month-long detention on charges of counterrevolutionary activities (*not* for the writing or publication of any poem) unleashed a broadly based argument into which were dragged, far more than ever before, men and women of good and bad faith. In addition, the move toward the Right was beginning. On the side of the Cuban Revolution's critics, the most significant event was the appearance of two open letters addressed to Fidel from Europe. The first one stated that the undersigned, despite their "solidarity with the principles and goals of the Cuban Revolution," addressed him "in order to express their concern arising from the arrest of the well-known [*sic*] poet and writer Heberto Padilla." Further down, it added:

Given that so far the Cuban government has not provided any information on the matter, this fact makes us fear the reappearance of a process of sectarianism even stronger and more dangerous than the one denounced by you in March 1962. . . . At a time when a socialist government has taken office in Chile and a new situation created in Peru and Bolivia facilitates the breaking down of American imperialism's criminal blockade of Cuba, the use of repressive methods against intellectuals and writers who have availed themselves of their right to criticism within the revolution cannot but have profoundly negative repercussions on anti-imperialist forces throughout the world, and most especially in Latin America, where the Cuban Revolution is a symbol and banner.⁸

This letter was copiously circulated by the world's capitalist media, becoming — whatever the intentions of at least some of its signers might have been — an open accusation against the Cuban Revolution, given the letter's assumption of the "use of repressive methods," and so forth, in Cuba. But its hue paled in comparison to the second letter. Contrary to what has been said even with the best of goodwill, this second letter was not the necessary consequence of the lack of response (since response would have been nearly impossible) to the first one. Between the first letter and the second stood a fiery speech by Fidel, the freeing of Padilla, and at his request, the publication of a document of self-criticism that, as became evident later on, was nothing more than a malicious caricature of the self-accusations prompted by the sadly famous Moscow trials in the mid-thirties. In other words, it was material written to be decoded by those already predis-

posed to seeing Cuba as undergoing a period similar to the so-called cult of personality in the USSR of the thirties.

The second letter did not have the backing of many of those who had lent their names to the first one. Among those who refused to sign the second letter, Julio Cortázar, by virtue of his conduct and his unimpeachable honesty, occupies a prominent place. In his letter dated 4 February 1972, in which he responds to one sent him by Haydée Santamaría, Cortázar said:

as to the writing of the first letter, the one I signed, I can simply tell you this: the original text that [Juan] Goytisolo submitted to me was very similar to the text of the second letter, that is, *paternalistic*, *insolent*, *unacceptable in every regard*. I refused to sign it, and I proposed an alternate text that, respectfully, went no further than a request for information about what had happened; you'd probably reply that, in addition, it expressed concern that a kind of "sectarian squeeze" was taking place in Cuba, and that's so; we feared this might be happening, but that fear was neither betrayal nor indignation nor protest. Please, reread the text and compare it to that of the second letter, which I naturally didn't sign. I can tell you (the "Polycritica" [Polycritique] says so as well, of course) that I'm sorry that the comrade-to-comrade request for information was accompanied by that expression of concern; but I insist that *insolent interference or paternalism of the kind displayed in the second, unspeakable letter* can by no means be attributed to those who signed the first one.⁹

That second letter, deserving of Cortázar's description, stated:

We deem it our duty to communicate to you our shame and anger. The pitiful text of the confession that Heberto Padilla signed can only have been obtained by methods that are the negation of revolutionary legality and justice. The content and form of said confession, with its absurd accusations and delirious statements, as well as the meeting that took place at UNEAC in which Padilla himself and comrades Belkis Cuza, Díaz Martínez, César López and Pablo Armando Fernández submitted to a pitiful charade of self-criticism, recalls the most sordid moments of the Stalinist period, its prefabricated practices and witch-hunts.¹⁰ With the same vehemence with which we have defended the Cuban Revolution from the outset, because we deemed it exemplary in its respect for human beings and in its struggle for liberation, we exhort it to avoid for Cuba the dogmatic obscurantism, the cultural xenophobia and the repressive system that Stalinism imposed in the socialist countries, in which events similar to those taking place in Cuba were flagrant examples. The disregard for human dignity entailed in forcing a man ridiculously to accuse himself of the worst betrayals and the vilest acts does not alarm us because it involves a writer but because any Cuban comrade — a peasant, worker, technician or intellectual — might

also be a victim of a similar act of violence or humiliation. We would like the Cuban Revolution once more to become what at one time lead us to consider it a model within socialism.¹¹

Corfázar died faithful to the ideas he expounded to Haydée in his letter of 4 February 1972. We can gather as much from the text added to a later edition of his valiant book *Nicaragua tan violentamente dulce* [Nicaragua so Violently Sweet], which, according to the colophon, "was printed on 25 January 1984," in Barcelona. (The first edition, without that essay, had appeared in Nicaragua in 1983.) The new text is titled "Apuntes al margen de una relectura de 1984" [Marginal Notations to a Rereading of 1984]. Although he states therein that "if the Padilla case finally had any positive outcome, it was that it separated the wheat from the chaff outside Cuba," he insists on the supposed virtues of the first letter. In contrast, he calls the second one "the well-known letter of the French intellectuals to Fidel Castro . . . , which was *paternalistic and unpardonable in its insolence*," and he adds, "but I can state with all necessary proof that that second letter never would have been sent if the first request for information regarding the facts—which I signed along with many others—had been answered within a reasonable period of time."¹²

Plainly, when Cortázar wrote those words he had not read Mario Vargas Llosa's aforementioned book, *Contra viento y marea* (1962–1982), "printed in the month of November, 1983," according to its colophon, which makes it virtually simultaneous with Julio's. In the Peruvian's book, the second open letter to Fidel appears with the following footnote:

The initiative for this protest was born in Barcelona, when the world press made known the UNEAC meeting in which Heberto Padilla emerged from the Cuban police dungeon to perform his "self-criticism." Juan and Luis Goytisolo, José María Castellet, Hans Magnus Enzensberger, Carlos Barral (who later decided not to sign the letter), and I got together at my house and wrote, each of us separately, a draft. Then we compared them and selected mine by vote. The poet Jaime Gil de Biedma improved the text by the addition of an adverb.¹³

Vargas Llosa therefore admits a number of things in this passage, the first being his authorship of the letter, which consequently was not the product of "French intellectuals" (proportionately there were no more of them signing this one than the first letter). Furthermore, he adds a list of sixty-one signatures, indifferent to the fact that many of the signers, just as with the previous letter, later expressed their disagreement with that course of action.

In addition to all these documents, many others, both for and against the Cuban position, appeared in numerous publications, fanning the flames of controversy. If I have brought these matters to bear, it is because they are the spark that

fired the writing of "Caliban." Three successive issues of *Casa de las Américas* were devoted to the dispute. The last of them, which bore the collective title *Sobre cultura y revolución en América Latina* [On Culture and Revolution in Latin America], included my essay. If it is now disengaged from that polemic, or if that polemic is not taken into account, it is evident that the meaning of "Caliban" is betrayed. I do not demand that readers familiarize themselves with all the material that surfaced in the heat of the polemic, but rather that they recall its bitterness. My piece was not born in a vacuum but rather at a particular time that was marked by passion, and—on our part—indignation at the paternalism, the rash accusation against Cuba, and even the grotesque "shame" and "anger" of those who, comfortably situated in the "West" with their fears, their guilt, and their prejudices, decided to proclaim themselves judges of the revolution.

But I would be simplistic to suppose that it was solely these skirmishes that gave rise to my text. Beginning much earlier, spurred on by the great intellectual challenge that the revolution we were (and are) living hurled at us, I had been broaching questions that, in some fashion, prefigured the 1971 essay. It is sufficient to recall a few journalistic pieces from 1959 and the essays "El son de vuelo popular" [The People's Poetic Voice] (written in 1962, on Nicolás Guillén's poetry), "Mart en su (tercer) mundo" [1965: Martí in his (Third) World] (1965), and "Introducción al pensamiento de Che" [Introduction to Che's Thought] (1967), just to point out a few earlier stepping stones.¹⁴ In general, it was a matter of reinterpreting our world in the demanding light of the revolution.

I will not spend an inordinate amount of time on "Caliban"'s anagrammatic history, which has been dealt with in minute detail by Roger Tomson in his book *Trois Calibans* [Three Calibans] (1981),¹⁵ nor on whether I am an imitator of the French, as, after a lengthy silence, Emir Rodríguez Monegal, the Uruguayan critic and former editor of *Mundo Nuevo*, would have it.¹⁶ I'm not much given to arguments with the dead, and I don't wish to deny the value of that writer's every word, but I do not believe that full immersion in cultural politics under the auspices of imperialism did him any good. When calling me a Gallicizer, supposing as he did that my use of the symbol of Caliban had French roots (a part of my cultural training does, though, of course, it has other roots as well), he coincided, perhaps unwittingly, with a repeated accusation made by the Voice of America's "Date with Cuba" program, bringing me together with friends such as Carpentier, Pérez de la Riva and Le Riverand in a sort of archaic Spanish insult that goes back centuries. Rodríguez Monegal seemed to forget on the one hand, that Caliban was an English, not a French, character, and on the other, that it was writers from the British West Indies like George Lamming and Edward Brathwaite, both of whom are cited in my text, who first connected the character to our countries—concretely, the Caribbean.¹⁷ Although I believe I was first to apply the symbol of Caliban to our America as a whole in Spanish, I don't think it particularly meritorious of me. In any event, Rodríguez Monegal got so interested in

the subject that he didn't stop until he offered university courses on it, which I always understood as a sort of involuntary homage he rendered me.

While we're on the subject of living authors, I'd like to mention a couple: one is Jorge Luis Borges; Carlos Fuentes is another. On the first of the two, who is called in the text "a truly important writer, although we so often disagree with him," I must state that I have never believed, as the English critic J. M. Cohen suspects in his useful book on the Argentine writer, that the prizes and distinctions he has been awarded have had anything to do with his political evolution.¹⁸ On the contrary, I always believed, and have had the opportunity to reconfirm, that with his ironic humor, he was an honest and modest man endowed with exceptional talent, whose political compass, which in his youth lead him to praise the October Revolution and later on to defend the Spanish Republic and oppose Nazi anti-Semitism, became disoriented (like that of many other Argentinians) when Perón took the reins of government in his country. His pronouncements became delirious and, furthermore, contrary to what he himself thinks, he is a writer with a political drift, which ranges between anarchism and conservatism.¹⁹ But his pronouncements have been toned down, and his literary quality seems to me now, looking at his work as a whole from the perspective of his very great old age, even better than it seemed to me then. Finally, I believe that the Mexican critic Jorge Alberto Manrique is quite right when, in one of the first critical notices of "Caliban," he points out:

It would be well to remember, as Borges himself has said, that vis-à-vis . . . [the] reading of Europe, he takes the sniping stance of an ironist, "from without." The best of his work is made of that: and in it can be recognized an attitude of Caliban. For everyone has his own responses, and it's worth the trouble to try to understand them.²⁰

It would not be right, on the other hand, to hide the fact that the sharpness of tone and the occasional sarcasm a propos of Fuentes took into account not only his work but, in addition, the fact that the Mexican, one of the most important Latin-American novelists of recent years, after having been politically close to us (which I would like him to continue being), was one of the main contributors to and ideologues of *Mundo Nuevo*, a signer of the two letters to Fidel in 1971, and the author of some unjust remarks on Cuba. This was the background that lead me to call the views he held back then into question in vivid terms: views that, furthermore, still seem mistaken to me. But since then, although Fuentes has not gone out of his way to insult me (rather than to argue with me), he has shown unequivocal support for the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions. I could not re-visit my essay without saying these things, whatever the reaction to them may be.

The circumstances in which I had to write "Caliban," in a few days, practically without sleeping or eating, feeling myself pressured by people for whom I have the highest regard, are responsible for a number of loose ends in the piece

that gave rise to misunderstandings. Later on, I tried to tie them up. Thus, for example, the relation between our America and its former collective metropolis lead me to write "Nuestra América y Occidente" [Our America and the West], and I dealt with the relation of Latin America to Spain in "Contra la leyenda Negra" [Against the Black Legend], which someone called my love letter to Spain. And, on a broader scale one that goes beyond regional limitations, I thought it necessary to revise "Algunos usos de civilización y barbarie" [Some Uses of Civilization and Barbarism]. In other instances, I was more concerned with literary than historical considerations. I think that the piece in that group that I least dislike is "Algunos problemas teóricos de la literatura hispanoamericana" [Some Theoretical Problems Concerning Latin-American Literature]. I have also touched (before and since) on problems that are less vast, more limited to particular authors or situations, but from the same viewpoint.

Caliban, then, became a crossroad where my earlier work lead and my later work began. Still, I would not like it to be judged in isolation but rather within the constellation of pieces that took shape around it. My wish is not, and never was, to present Latin America and the Caribbean as a region cut off from the rest of the world but rather to view it precisely as a part of the world—a part that should be looked at with the same attention and respect as the rest, not as a merely paraphrastic expression of the West. Several friends did me the honor of pointing out similarities between my goal, dealing with our reality, and the one the Palestinian Edward W. Said had set for himself in his noteworthy book *Orientalism* (1978).²¹

If there is one thing that troubles me now about the term "Third World," it is the degradation that it perhaps involuntarily presupposes. There is just one world in which the oppressors and the oppressed struggle, one world in which, rather sooner than later, the oppressed will be victorious. Our America is bringing its own nuances to this struggle, this victory. The tempest has not subsided. But *The Tempest's* shipwrecked sailors, Crusoe and Gulliver, can be seen, rising out of the waters, from terra firma. There, not only Prospero, Ariel and Caliban, Don Quixote, Friday and Faust await them, but Soffia and Oliveira, and Colonel Aureliano Buendía as well, and — halfway between history and dream — Marx and Lenin, Bolívar and Martí, Sandino and Che Guevara.

—Havana, 13 March 1986

Against the Black Legend

There are, we might say, two kinds of learned Spanish, just as there are two kinds of English, one European and the other American, which, in essence, are differentiated from one another by certain peculiarities of pronunciation.¹

This visible (or, better still, audible) differentiation, which might also be called an enrichment, fortunately does not also entail the risk of linguistic fragmentation, as occurred with Latin after the fall of the Roman Empire, and as Andrés Bello and Rufino José Cuervo* feared (and fought) in the nineteenth century, because "the nations into which the Spanish Empire was divided are in closer communication today than when they constituted a single state."² While permitting variation and enrichment on both sides, the unity of our language has properly been preserved, thus guaranteeing fruitful communication and the survival of a homogeneous link to the rest of the world.

Beyond language, the situation is, of course, much more complex. Spanish Americans like to say about Spaniards that we do not descend from those who stayed but rather from those who came, whose offspring had already ceased to be Spaniards and were becoming first Creoles and, later on, after intermixing with other ethnic groups, Latin Americans. The logic of this distinction is clear: over a century and a half ago, Spanish America began its political break from the battered and decadent Spanish Empire, which was destined to lose its remaining American possessions, including Cuba in 1898. Moreover, the first definition of Spanish America was made in counterpoint to Spain, and it necessarily implied emphasizing our differences. It was, we are aware, a complex differentiation, one in which the urgency of pointing out what distinguished us from the old metropolis, unaccompanied by truly original solutions, contributed to the seduction of many by the lure of new and aggressive metropolises—as if changing masters, as Martí warned, were the same as being free.

The acceptance of proposals to "Westernize," which fascinated certain Spanish-American groups intent on modernization, was facilitated by the Spain's lamentable situation and the iniquitous exploitation it imposed on the territories where new nations were arising. But a contributing factor was that, beginning in the sixteenth century, Spain and its culture had been branded by an unrelenting anti-Spanish campaign that has come to be known as the Black Legend. It is worth pausing to consider this legend, uncritical acceptance of which, as we shall see, has had generally negative consequences, especially for ourselves.

* Andrés Bello (1781–1864). The great Venezuelan-Chilean educator, linguist, and grammarian is considered the founder of Latin-American language studies. The Colombian scholar, Rufino José Cuervo (1844–1911), was Bello's successor. A linguist, grammarian, and lexicographer, he was the founder of Latin-American philology. —Trans.

*To my Spanish comrades,
in and outside Spain*

The Paleo-Western Heritage

The stimulating discussion, renewed in recent years, on the nature of Latin-American culture has come to emphasize the authenticity of our indigenous Indian and African heritage and to point out our distance from—or, if you will, our sympathies with and differences from—the "West," the developed capitalist countries. This shift is essential, for though we may not be Europeans, we are no doubt, as Alejandro Lipschutz has put it, "Europoids."

But we have another important heritage, which I would venture to call intermediate—neither indigenous, nor in the strict sense "Western," but rather, as I have suggested elsewhere, "Paleo-Western": our Iberian heritage. In any attempt, however modest, to specify the roots of our culture, we cannot gloss over our relationship to our Iberian background. My intention here is to present some general ideas on this relationship, emphasizing the evident poles: Spain and Spanish America.

It is obvious that a considerable part of our culture derives from a Spanish source. Although to speak of a "source" implies a metaphor and although the Spanish presence in the subsequent elaboration of our culture should not be exaggerated, neither should it be minimized; nor, indeed, should we attempt to obliterate it with the stroke of a pen. We received much more than a language from Spain; nevertheless, the peculiar form of that reception is revealed even in language. Ramón Menéndez Pidal, discussing the unity of the language, observed:

The Rationale of the Black Legend

To all appearances, the Black Legend originated in the justifiably shared rejection of the monstrous crimes committed on this continent by the Spanish conquerors. But a minimal respect for historical veracity indicates that this is simply false. The crimes were committed, and, yes, they were monstrous. But seen from the perspective of later centuries, they were no more monstrous than those committed by the metropolises that enthusiastically took Spain's place in this fearful some enterprise and sowed death and desolation on every continent. If anything distinguishes the Spanish conquest from the depredations of Holland, France, England, Germany, Belgium, and the United States, to mention a few illustrious Western nations, it is not the magnitude of the crimes, in which they are all worthy rivals, but rather the magnitude of the scruples. The conquests carried out by these countries were not lacking in death and destruction; what they did lack were men like Bartolomé de las Casas and internal debates on the legitimacy of conquest such as the ones inspired by the Dominicans, which shook the Spanish Empire in the sixteenth century. This does not mean that such men, always in the minority, succeeded in imposing their views, but they were able to argue their case before the highest authorities, and they were listened to and, to a certain extent, taken seriously. The French scholar Pierre Vilar, who has written on Spanish history with vast knowledge and a correct perspective, can argue:

It is an honour for a colonial power to have had a Las Casas, and not to have exiled or disgraced him. In mid-century the School of Salamanca, with Melchor Cano, Domingo de Soto, and Francisco de Vitoria, lifted the discussion from the humanitarian to the juridical plane of "human rights." . . . It is imperative to distinguish between practice, no more brutal than any other type of colonization, and theory, with laws of the most noble intent (often absent in more recent colonial enterprise).³

It is also useful to note what scholars like Fernando Ortiz, Alejandro Lipschütz, and Laurette Séjourné, who have taken a clear stance against colonialism and in defense of the indigenous communities massacred by the Spanish Empire and those that came later, have had to say about the Black Legend. For Fernando Ortiz, "The conquest of the New World surely was extremely cruel," but "it was not so black or so legendary" given that:

the blackness of its very human inhumanity was not exclusive to Spain or any darker than the other instances of genocide and subjugation by fire and blood and the most refined techniques when the uncontrolled desire for power and wealth darken peoples' conscience, even though they hide it with protestations about ideological fatalism, manifest destiny, natural predestination or service to God.⁴

Alejandro Lipschütz, for his part, maintains that

the Black Legend is *naïve*; even worse, it is *malicious propaganda*. Naïve, because the conquistadors and the early colonists are no example of the Spanish people's morals; malicious propaganda, because seigneurial societies have carried out *all* their conquests in a similarly fearful way and still do.⁵

Moreover, he argues that

[b]y the same logic, we ought to concoct an anti-Portuguese, anti-British, anti-French, anti-German, anti-Russian, and anti-Yankee Black Legend. There is nothing in the terrible events that Las Casas succinctly labeled "the destruction of the Indies," that was determined by the fact that the conquerors and early colonizers of America were Spaniards, or, if you prefer, that they belonged to the Spanish "race." Everything is determined by the fact that they were instruments, whether blind or sighted, of a domineering *seigneurial regime transported to an alien, tribal world by means of conquest*. . . . In the pogrom of the conquest, the inner nature of the seigneurial regime is made manifest. If you like, an anti-Spanish, anti-Portuguese, anti-British, etc., Black Legend is inappropriate; what is appropriate is an *antiseigneurial* Black Legend. And there is an even more important historical fact: the truth is that it is not a matter of an *antiseigneurial legend* but rather of a genuine, thousand-year-old *seigneurial reality*.⁶

Finally, Laurette Séjourné admits:

We have also realized that systematic accusations against the Spaniards play a pernicious role in this vast drama, because they locate the occupation of America outside the broad canvas of which it is a part, since colonization is all of Europe's mortal sin. . . . No other nation would have done any better. . . . On the contrary, Spain distinguished itself by a gesture of capital importance: heretofore, it has been the only country where powerful voices were raised against the war of conquest.⁷

These observations help us understand the real reasons for the rise and dissemination of the anti-Spanish Black Legend, which does indeed "locate the occupation of America outside the broad canvas of which it is a part." It is essential, therefore, to reject that mislocation and to locate the occupation of our continent within that "broad canvas." Then we can see plainly that "at bottom, the conquest and colonization of America in the sixteenth century is part of the rise and consolidation of capitalism."⁸ Those crimes can therefore be imputed to the "rise and consolidation of capitalism," not to this or that nation. And they reveal

the deep hypocrisy and *barbarism* characteristic of *bourgeois civilization* as such, standing naked before our eyes when, instead of seeing it at

home, where it is on its best behaviour, we see it in the Colonies, where it removes its mask.⁹

The Black Legend was created and disseminated precisely to hide this truth, that "capital, [comes into the world] dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt,"¹⁰ and to throw the blame on a *single nation*, Spain, which in the sixteenth century was the most powerful on earth and whose place, therefore, others desired, and plotted to, and finally did, take.¹¹ It was the nascent bourgeoisie of other metropolises who created the Black Legend, not, of course, for the benefit of those peoples martyred by the Spanish conquest but rather to cover up their own rapacity.¹² The Black Legend was thus a handy ideological weapon in the interimperial struggle that accompanied the rise of capitalism and lasted for several centuries, although by the end of the seventeenth century that struggle for all practical purposes had been decided in favor of new metropolises like Holland, France, and England, the major propagators of the legend. Naturally, in this struggle there were (and are) contradictions and mutual recriminations among the bourgeoisies of the respective powers, but they took place against a background of common interests similar to that of today's transnationals. This allowed them to praise one another not as the bandits they were (and are) but as the shining representatives of civilization *as such*. For example, the interimperialist contradictions that led to World War I at the beginning of this century were accompanied by the emergence of new Black Legends, just as mendacious as the original ones and, sadly, reflecting crimes just as real. They were forged by the warring contingents, to the detriment of their temporary enemies in the division of the world; they were products not only of the respective bourgeoisies but also, shamefully, of the traitors of the Second International, the pseudo-socialists who have left such a lamentable heritage to the present. But such legions did not continue to prosper once the war ended (nor, despite the horrors of nazism, did the anti-German Black Legend prosper after the Second World War), save in an attenuated and haphazard form typical of the ridiculous extremes of bourgeois national chauvinism. They did not prosper because it could not be otherwise among accomplices to the same crimes, especially not after the rise and ever more powerful development of the socialist world made possible the ongoing process of decolonization and forced the "civilized" barbarians to hurriedly remake their common cause. To give a name to this common cause—the cause of world exploitation, genocide, pillage and horror—they dusted off the terms "Western" and "Western culture," according to them the very essence of human splendor. This White Legend of the "civilized" West is the reverse of the original, and it has no other purpose or value. When it is not used as a murder weapon, it is simply idle chatter.

The Two Spains?

The means by which Spanish reactionaries have endeavored to combat the Black Legend have been, as we might expect, utterly ineffective. Reading their laborious texts,¹³ one occasionally feels tempted to subscribe to the legend, which would be a serious mistake. Incapacitated by the narrow perspective of their class interests, they are content (in addition to insulting other countries) simply to make lists of sterile glories and worthless instances of national grandeur, while denigrating truly admirable individuals and achievements in Spanish history and culture. A characteristic example is the unanimous and bitter hatred expressed by Spanish reactionaries for the extraordinary Bartolomé de las Casas, to whom, presently, we shall have occasion to return.

The dichotomy shows that these writers, though afflicted with antidialectical mummification, are not entirely unaware of the duality that is at the heart of every national culture, as Lenin explained it.¹⁴ The problem is that, claiming for themselves the totality of the Spanish heritage and blinkered by an ultrareactionary and clerical view of that heritage, they attempt to expel from it much of what we would consider vital and alive in Spain, blindly defending, by the same token, all that seems dead, ossified, and negative.

The only valid method is to begin by *explicitly* calling into question that false totality that would force us to accept or reject "Spanishness" en bloc—an absurd option—and proclaiming the existence not of one but of *two* cultures: seigneurial culture (as Lipschutz has it), and popular culture, the culture of the oppressors and the culture of the oppressed. The latter is for us the one that is truly alive, and we defend its works. But on this basis we can also proceed to consider the former without rejecting it out of hand (paying attention to Leninist praxis as well as theory), assimilating critically everything in it that is of general value to humanity.¹⁵

Indeed, few countries have expressed the consciousness of this duality as vividly as has Spain. Because of its advanced position in the early stages of capitalism and European expansion and its subsequent decline and eventual marginalization from the development of the capitalist system (which it was in some measure responsible for engendering), the question of an external duality (Europe/Spain) as well as an internal one ("the two Spains") becomes a constant of Spanish thought and letters almost from the beginning of the decadence, in the early seventeenth century.¹⁶ Suffice it to recall Larra's striking epitaph in "Día de difuntos de 1836" [All Souls Day, 1836]: "Here lies half of Spain: it died of the

* Mariano José de Larra (1808–1837), a journalist and playwright, was Spain's most important Romantic writer. Tormented by Spain's political problems, he took his life at the age of twenty-eight. The article "All Souls Day, 1836" was, in effect, his epitaph. —Trans.

Without denying the evident existence of a *single* Spanish history, which in turn is part of world history, any consideration of Spain that fails to take into account the internal existence of these two cultures and insists on speaking of Spain in the singular, whether to denigrate or praise it, can only be legendary.

Spain and the West

It is not surprising, given its origin, that the Black Legend should find a place among the diverse and permanently unacceptable forms of racism. We need only mention the sad case of the United States, where the words "Hispanic" or "Latino" as applied to Latin Americans—to Puerto Ricans and Chicanos in particular—carry a strong connotation of the disdain with which the apparently transparent citizens of that unhappy country habitually deal with persons "of color." It may be useful, as well, to recall a statement attributed in its classical form to Alexandre Dumas: "Africa begins at the Pyrenees." The sacrosanct West thus shows its repugnance toward the *other*, which is not itself, and finds the embodiment par excellence of this *other* in Africa, whose tortured present was caused by Western capitalism, which "underdeveloped" it in order to make its own growth possible.¹⁷

By taking offense at Dumas's statement, Spanish reactionary thought again makes a muddle of things. What it demonstrates is that it is as racist as those who would subscribe to such a notion: for in fact Spain's capital sin was the doctrine of "purity of blood." Reality is always much more lively and instructive than those who are quick to lash out against what they consider an offense to their honor would normally imagine. The real history of Spain, not the one composed of official texts filled with empty rhetoric, shows us the utter untruth of what the West thinks about itself. I refer to that singular myth according to which Reason was revealed to Greece, became an Empire in Rome, and assimilated a Religion that was destined, after several centuries in hibernation, to reappear like an armed prophet in the works of the (post-barbarian) Westerners, who were to spend the next several centuries fulfilling the onerous mission of bringing the light of "civilization" to the rest of the planet. If any country permits us to unmask the genial fraud implicit in this "history" appropriated by the developed Western bourgeoisie, it is Spain—a fact that no doubt has contributed in no small measure to the denigration it has suffered at Western hands. I do not pretend to be an expert on the matter, but common knowledge is sufficient to begin to rectify this mendacious cultural autobiography.

Over and against the stupid simplification according to which "Eternal Spain" was occupied for several centuries by Arab infidels whom she eventually succeeded in expelling from the peninsula, thus preserving the purity of the Christian faith and keeping the contagion of Muhammadan barbarism from Europe, a much richer truth can be registered: Christians, Moors, and Jews, all

other half." We might also remember that the magnificent poet Antonio Machado,* who in works like "El mañana efímero" [The Ephemeral Future]—written in 1913, the same year Lenin wrote of the existence of two cultures—distinguished between two different Spains:

La España de charanga y pandereta,
cerrado y sacristía,
devota de Frascuelo y de María,
de espíritu burlón y de alma quieta.
.....
Esa España inferior que ora y bosteza,
vieja y tahr, zaragatera y triste;
esa España inferior que ora y embiste
cuando se digna usar de la cabeza,
.....
la España del cincel y de la maza,
con esa eterna juventud que se hace
del pasado macizo de la raza.
Una España implacable y redentora,
España que alborca
Con un hacha en la mano vengadora,
España de la rabia y de la idea.

[The Spain of cymbals and tambourines,
convents and sacristies,
devoted to Frascuelo and Mary,
cynical in spirit, deal of soul.

.....
That inferior Spain which prays and yawns,
an aged gambler, querulous and sad;
that inferior Spain which prays and charges
when it deigns to use its head,

.....
the Spain of chisel and hammer,
eternal youth sculpted from the
rock-like past of our race.

An implacable, redeeming Spain,
Spain at dawn
armed with an avenger's ax,
Spain armed with fury and an idea.]

* Antonio Machado (1875-1939), Spain's greatest modern poet and a defender of the Second Spanish Republic, he died in exile in France at the conclusion of the 1936-1939 Civil War. — Trans.

equally Spanish, lived side by side for more than seven centuries, mutually and fruitfully influencing each other, as Américo Castro has explained in his controversial book. In that process, "one could never . . . state that what was Spanish was either European or Eastern." Moreover,

Pressed by the charge of Islam and by French ambitions, Castile cultivated the clever, energetic style of a fencer, a master of thrusts and parries. The pressure of living under the threat of the world's highest civilization from the ninth to the twelfth centuries lead Castile to delegate to the Moors and Jews under its rule those tasks involving the world of things, technical prowess and sustained thought.¹⁸

Almost at the same time that Castro's book was published, Menéndez Pidal wrote:

Although Southern Spain, Al-Andalus, developed a version of Islam that was highly Hispanicized in its customs, art, and ideology, it remained cut off from Europe and tied to the Afro-Asian cultural orbit. Northern, European Spain, although unyielding in its Christianity, fell under the influence of the south at a time when Arab culture was far superior to Latin culture, and thus it fulfilled the high historical destiny of acting as a link between the two orbits, East and West.¹⁹

Spain, in other words, was the conduit through which the influence of Arab civilization — "the world's highest . . . from the ninth to the twelfth centuries" — and Arab culture — "far superior to Latin culture" — entered Europe and brought new life to the still pallid European cultural world. This influence made itself felt in its philosophy, its literature, its science, its technology, its agriculture, its customs, in Aquinas, and in Dante. As the Spanish priest Miguel Asín Palacios pointed out, "Our nation can justly claim for some of its Muslim thinkers no small measure of the glory that criticism the world over has showered on Dante Alighieri's immortal work."²⁰

But Spain was not only the "link between Christendom and Islam," as Menéndez Pidal put it. Because of the breadth of the Islamic world, Spain's function as a bridge was even more important for Europe, which gained access to the achievements of Greece, Persia, and India that the Arabs had assimilated. Think of the short story or of mathematics: remember the zero, an Indian invention that entered Europe through Arab Spain; the arithmetic book written at the caliph's urging by the ninth-century Persian Al-Khwarizmi, who gave his name to our numbers (*algarismo* in old Spanish; *guarismo* in modern). José Luciano Franco notes, in addition:

The primitive Iberians were Negroid . . . From the Capsian peoples of the Moghreb came the immigrants who populated Iberia many millennia prior to our era; and it is the primitive Iberians who, in their traditional

contact with the peoples of its own ethnic group who stayed in Africa, gave birth to a phenomenon of transculturation that continued for more than twenty centuries and culminated with the Arabs, the Berbers, and the Sephardic Jews.²¹

It follows that, of the Spaniards singled out "for their cultural and linguistic traits as Arabs or Muslims" who were expelled with the Sephardic Jews in 1492, many were "in fact, Africans, mainly Berbers and Blacks."²²

If we take all this into account, then it is not only Africa that, fortunately, begins at the Pyrenees but Asia as well. Moreover, this fact, along with many others, explains Europe's cultural reawakening in the twilight of the Middle Ages. If we also take into account the fact that the so-called Greek miracle had solid Afro-Asian roots, as we now know, and that Christianity itself was a beautifully quarrelsome Asiatic sect whose scandalous egalitarianism took hold among the slaves of the Roman Empire — just as, in Engels's classic analogy, socialism later would take hold among the new slaves of European capitalism,²³ then it becomes clear to what extent the West's idea of itself as a new "chosen people" is as false as similar ideas have been throughout history. Alejo Carpentier* likes to evoke the sad fate of the Carib people, a proud and bellicose community that extended from the shores of the Orinoco to the sea to which it gave its name (and its bones, to the cry of "Only the Carib is human"). When it sought to expand into the islands of the great sea, it collided with the proud and bellicose Spaniards, whose crosses and swords proved to be just as fragile as the arrows, war cries, and aboriginal canoes of the people they conquered. The implacable march of full capitalist development pushed aside Spain and her history, despite its debts to Spain (including her philosophical, artistic, scientific, technological, and juridical legacy to Europe) and her role as the vanguard of Europe's penetration of the New World (which, through her bloody extraction of gold and silver, generated the "primitive accumulation" destined to pass into the greedy hands of those Genoese and German bankers fond of referring sarcastically to the arrogant Spanish noblemen as "our Indians"). In spite of everything, Pierre Vilar reminds us that

Velázquez's Spain was still, however, an influential nation; it was the inspiration for France's *grand siècle*, and Castilian around 1650 was everywhere the language of civilisation. On the Isle of Pheasants (in the tapestry of Versailles) the august distinction of the Castilian court outshines the tasteless display of Louis XIV and his following. It was to be a long time before the *nouveaux riches* of England, the Low Countries and France herself could bring themselves to pardon Spain.²⁴

* Alejo Carpentier (1904-1980). Cuba's most important novelist, he was, in addition, an excellent essayist and musicologist. His work is amply available in English. — Trans.

They were to "pardon" Spain with the Black Legend.

If it is understandable that the legend continues to live on in the reactionary sectors of the West, those for whom racism, mystification, resentment and irrationality are essential, it may seem less understandable at first sight that the legend still has currency in sectors considered part of the Western Left, where one would expect a more reasoned judgment of history. That this is so, nevertheless, exemplifies the sort of paternalistic European leftist who, as Jacques Arnault remarks, "denounces colonialism, but his hair stands on end when he finds the same denunciation in the writings of a colonial."²⁵

As a case in point, consider a classic representative of a certain Western Left, Jean-Paul Sartre, expounding on Spanish culture in a manner Alexandre Dumas might have recognized as his own. To a (loaded) question put him by the journal *Libre*, Sartre replies: "When I first went to Cuba, I remember that one of the Cubans' chief concerns was to resuscitate their old culture, which unfortunately is Spanish, to guard against the absorbing influence of the United States."²⁶ One might think that Sartre is referring to the *present* situation of Spanish culture, which is lamentable indeed; but no, he speaks explicitly of "*their old culture, which unfortunately is Spanish*." Why insist on the obvious oversights? The old culture could be the native American, or the African, or the Creole, but for Sartre it is the old *Spanish* culture that is "unfortunate." In the countries that have risen out of colonialism, the old culture, if we omit as Sartre does the extra-European component, can only be the culture of the respective colonizers. Why the devil would we be more fortunate if our culture were Dutch, as in the case of Surinam, or English, as in Jamaica; or French, as in Haiti? How have these countries been favored over us by their relation to a non-Spanish metropolitan culture? Although he may not be aware of this, Sartre is doing nothing more in such remarks than subscribing to the Black Legend. The most important and definitive thing is that those countries born of colonialism, Cuba among them, have not only our respective old cultures but a new, revolutionary culture that we are creating together as well.

Jean-Jacques Fol offers another minor example of this same phenomenon in his evaluation of Las Casas, "No doubt," he writes, "Bolívar called Las Casas 'the Apostle of America,' and Martí sang his praises. But does this really suffice? Should we not be more farsighted?" Seeing farther than Bolívar and Martí is quite a task. Here is the mouse that the mountain of Monsieur Fol's "long view" brings forth: "After all, Father Las Casas's defense of America was accomplished to the detriment of Africa, and the salvation of the Indians was made possible by the arrival of slaves brought from Africa."²⁷ If this gentleman's ignorance were not as great as his telescopic fatuity, he would have needed only to have looked at a few maps of America (like the ones in Manuel Galich's essay "El indio y el negro, ahora y antes" [Indians and Blacks, Then and Now]) to learn that where the "salvation of the Indians" occurred (the Mesoamerican pla-

teau, the Andean sierra, etc.) are precisely the regions into which African slaves were *not* brought.²⁸ Rather, they were brought to work on the plantations of the coastal lowlands where the Indian *had already been exterminated*. But above all, Fol should have known that such a calumny against Las Casas, one of the noblest figures in human history, represents a base and reactionary canard. As Fernando Ortiz wrote back in 1938,

Against Las Casas there was a dual desire, first, to erase from living memory the name of the man who criticized the barbarism of the conquest and destruction of the West Indies and, at the same time, when his name inevitably was brought up, to denigrate him, attributing to him the initiative for the slave trade . . . This was the outrageous calumny that the defenders of Spanish colonialism and slavery hurled at him.²⁹

Ortiz would return to this question several times (as would such excellent and responsible scholars as Silvio Zavala and Juan Comas), especially in a definitive study, "La 'leyenda negra' contra Fray Bartolomé" [The 'Black Legend' against Father Bartolomé].³⁰ It is true that in the course of his dramatic and exemplary evolution, in which there was no lack of self-criticism, Las Casas, as was normal at that time among the Spaniards who had come to America, possessed detachments of commandeered Indian laborers (*encomiendas*)—before he became an impassioned defender of the Indians. And like everyone else at the time, including Thomas More in his projected *Utopia* of 1516, he believed slavery (both black and white, with no racial distinction) to be natural—before he committed himself to the impassioned defense of the blacks. But only a malicious, unthinking ignoramus would accuse Las Casas of being an *encomendero*, or a slaver, or of being anti-Indian or anti-black. Las Casas was not born Las Casas: like everyone else, he became who he was, although very few people achieved as much as he did. With full knowledge of the great Dominican's work and with the authority that his formidable scholarship on Cuba's African heritage confers upon him, Fernando Ortiz concluded his essay on Las Casas with these words:

If Las Casas can be called "the Apostle of the Indians," he was also "the Apostle of the Blacks." History challenges his enemies to show texts in support of black slaves, against their capture in Africa and their transportation across the seas, their exploitation in America and their cruel treatment everywhere, that predate, and are more vivid and conclusive than, the writings of the great Spaniard, Bartolomé de las Casas.³¹

To this challenge, of course, Las Casas's detractors have as yet made no reply, which has not prevented them from spreading the nonsense that Monsieur Fol

parrots, thus fueling the howling ultrareactionaries and helping to prolong the Black Legend against Father Bartolomé.³²

Spain's Decadence

A point that I neither can nor wish to gloss over is the hoary cliché of Spain's decadence. That decadence is an incontrovertible fact but one that has nothing to do with supposed defects immanent to "Spanishness." The decline of an empire, which Spain would be the first modern nation to experience, had happened before and there would be other instances, such as Portugal, Holland, France, and even England—"the Queen of the Seas" back in our childhood, today a provincial lady more closely resembling Agatha Christie's Miss Marple. As each old empire declined, the new imperial power, the Yankee Empire, rushed helpfully in and, by hook or by crook, tried to inherit the former colonies. It wrested Puerto Rico and the Philippines from Spain; from France and Portugal it tried to inherit Indochina and Angola. As we know, the people of those countries have something else in mind.

The reasons for Spain's decline are well known, although some of them are still debated.³³ A series of disasters, such as the expulsion of the Jews and Moriscos and the crushing of the *comuneros* at Villalar by Charles V,³⁴ stifled the growth of the bourgeoisie and led to the recrudescence of feudalism that Ferdinand and Isabella had endeavored to check. The arrival of fabulous amounts of American treasure, in the absence of groups able to turn it into capital, sealed this regression. Pierre Vilar explains:

The triumph of the *crisiano viejo* implied a certain contempt for money-making, even for the production of goods, and a certain attraction to the caste system. In mid-sixteenth century, the guilds began to oblige their members to prove their *limpieza de sangre*—a poor apprenticeship for entry into the capitalist age. . . . For some, the "Indian gold" served in itself to ensure Spanish hegemony—for others it is the root cause of Spanish decadence. . . . The profits were not "invested" in the capitalist sense of the term, and the fortunate emigrants dreamed of buying land, of building "castles" and of amassing treasure. The drama and the *Quixote* record this attitude in the peasant and the noble. . . . Recent pronouncements make a virtue out of Spain's incompatibility with capitalism, but this has condemned the country to inefficiency.³⁴

This defeat of the bourgeoisie, this persistence of feudal structures, marked

* Charles V (1500–1558) was the first Spanish Hapsburg. Shortly after assuming the Spanish throne in 1517, he provoked an armed rebellion of the Castilian cities, the *comunidades*. The rebels, or *comuneros*, were crushed by the royal armies at Villalar in 1521.—Trans.

Spain's future. The survival of an archaic ideology embodied in an obscurantist Catholicism set bourgeois modernization against the straitjacket of the Counter-Reformation, causing the retardation (and even loss) of the scientific knowledge that was indispensable for the bourgeoisie (though not for feudal society).³⁵ In spite of efforts at reform in the eighteenth century, the outlook was grim at the beginning of the nineteenth, and Latin Americans could not fail to resent it bitterly. Upon returning from his journey to Spain in 1846, Sarmiento³⁶ would write with his habitual rudeness: "[At present] you [Spaniards] have no authors, no writers, no men of learning, no economists, no politicians, no historians, nor anything of the sort"; and in 1890, writing about the poet Sellés, Martí would state, "The Spanish-speaking peoples get nothing from Spain but rehashes." This is not necessarily a concession to the Black Legend but rather fidelity to the sad facts. The best Spaniards, from Larra to Costa,³⁷ said exactly the same thing. This is how a modern historian, Tuñón de Lara, describes the Spain from which Spanish America broke away:

Spain was, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a country that lived within the bounds of what has been called the *ancien régime*, that is, an overwhelmingly agrarian country dominated by large holding and seigniorial ownership, where the nobility and the church held most of the sources of wealth. . . . The vestiges of feudalism were so marked that, in many instances, ownership of land included the power of life and death over the villagers and peasants living on it.³⁶

And, according to Roberto Mesa, "Nineteenth-century Spain is one great museum piece, the executor of the empire's last will and testament." What is more, given the annulment of the relative revival experienced between 1898 and the Civil War, Franco's Spain, "beyond all timelessness, fashionable technocracy, and the consumer society, is an immense grotesquerie [*esperpento*] that ranges from Goya's etchings to Valle-Inclán's³⁸ benedictine military men."³⁷

This awful historical situation, this structural backwardness of a European country that never underwent a bourgeois revolution and remained overwhelmed by feudal remnants, explains the generally low level of its theoretical disputes, a fact that Cajal³⁹ alluded to. Beginning in the period when decadence is there for

* Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (1811–1888), Argentine writer, politician, and historian, author of *Facundo o civilización y barbarie* [Facundo: civilization or barbarism] (1945). He was president of Argentina from 1868 to 1874.—Trans.

† Joaquín Costa (1844–1911), Spanish scholar, educator, and political reformer, he argued vigorously for the Europeanization of Spain.—Trans.

‡ Ramón María del Valle-Inclán (1866–1936). A bohemian novelist and playwright and Spain's most inspired modernist, he pitilessly satirized official Spain in his *esperpentos*, or grotesqueries.—Trans.

§ Santiago Ramón y Cajal (1852–1934). A Spanish biologist, he was awarded a Nobel Prize in 1906 for his research on the human nervous system.—Trans.

all to see, many of her best thinkers became entangled in endless squabbles over the need to Europeanize Spain.³⁸ This, naturally, meant different things in different circumstances and generally lead to confused propositions, even in men as energetic and clear-minded as Costa. Consider, for example, the contradictory Unamuno,³⁹ who in *En torno al casticismo* [Regarding Spanishness] (1895) subscribed to Costa's quite reasonable thesis only to go to the other extreme, seeing some things clearly but irrationally closing himself off to others; or think of the Westernized Ortega,⁴⁰ a classic case of what Machado called "the tragic frivolity of our reactionaries"; or consider those who, at present, believe that a Spain yoked to the interests of the transnationals will be modernized. Plainly, Spain is in urgent need of modernization, but it will not be achieved through "Europeanization" or "Westernization." The latter, as Spanish America showed, can lead only to neocolonialism. Real modernization will come from profound structural change, with the revolution for which Costa cried out in anguish. But it will not be the bourgeois democratic revolution that he championed. It will move forward toward the socialist revolution prefigured in the Republic of 1936-39, which will turn Spain not into a Western but rather a post-Western country, just as in Russia in 1917 and Cuba in 1959. There is no Western (that is, developed capitalist) future for Spain. Today it is a paleo-Western country; in the future—soon, we hope—it will be a post-Western one.

Our Spain

This economically underdeveloped and, until recently, politically shackled Spain is a country that we Spanish Americans can only consider our sister: it is a country like ours. Its tormented past is also, in a way, ours; its sad present is similar to that of many of our countries (especially now that fascism is attempting to expand on our continent). Its future is very much our concern. With great pain, we see the descendants of harmonious Indo-American and African societies doing the hardest jobs in today's capitalist world. The destiny of the poor descendants of Spain's ruinous grandeur is scarcely different: those who do not languish in their own country are servants in France, miners in Belgium, unskilled workers in West Germany. This too gives us pain.

Fortunately, our hope of eventually seeing a revolutionary and victorious Spain is not based on mere sentimental illusions. Marx pointed out at the middle

³⁸ Miguel de Unamuno (1864-1936). A Spanish writer, poet, philosopher, and educator, he was considered the moral voice of early twentieth-century Spain. Many of his more important essays have been translated into English. — Trans.

³⁹ José Ortega y Gasset (1883-1955). The most influential Spanish philosopher of the twentieth century, he was a Nietzschean elitist who, in 1923, founded a monthly journal, the *Revista de Occidente* [Occidental Review]. — Trans.

of the nineteenth century that "Napoleon, who, like all his contemporaries, considered Spain a lifeless corpse, was given a deadly surprise on discovering that, although the Spanish state was dead, Spanish society was everywhere full of life and bursting with the force of resistance."³⁹ Forty years ago this fact was proven again: the glow of that example, which illuminated my childhood, has not been extinguished. Savagely attacked by the Fascist blitzkrieg that was later to cut through Europe like a knife through butter only to come to ruin against the magnificent Soviet people, Spain showed for three unforgettable years, from 1936 to 1939, how much it was still "full of life and bursting with the force of resistance." It is indicative of our solidarity with Spain that the best Spanish-American poets went to the peninsula in those years and wrote some of their finest poems in homage to the Spanish people's resistance: "Children of the world: / mother Spain is shouldering its womb," wrote impassioned César Vallejo. And there too, a symbol of our common destiny, rests the generous Pablo de la Torriente Brau, "the sun of Spain in his face / and Cuba's in his bones," as his brother, Miguel Hernández would write.

Is it really necessary to insist on the intimacy we now feel and always will feel for this other Spain, the Spain where Las Casa and the great Dominicans of the sixteenth century, "the most brilliant moment of hispanic anticolonialist thought,"⁴⁰ nobly defended the first Americans; the Spain of thinkers (even though many of them were forced to work outside Spain) like Vives and the Erasmusists,⁴¹ of Servet, Huarte, Suárez, Sánchez, Feijoo, Cadalso, Jovellanos, Blanco-White—and, for that matter, after the Independence of nearly all of Spanish America, Larra, Pi y Margall, the Krausists,⁴² Costa, Pablo Iglesias, Cajal, some of the Generation of 1898⁴³ and above all Antonio Machado; the Spain whose people, in a dramatic undertaking, engendered the rebellious descendants of our America; the Spain of the *comuneros*, the guerrillas who fought Napoleon, the *cortes* of Cadiz, Riego and the Institución Libre de Enseñanza; the Spain of workers, peasants, and thinkers; the Spain that fought magnificently for all of humankind from 1936 to 1939 and lost once again? With the eyes of this Spain we can look upon the members of an extraordinary and complex family: the art of Arab Spain, the *Poem of the Cid*, Don Juan Manuel, the Archbishop of Hita, the *Celestina*, the medieval ballads and the picaresque novel, Garcilaso, Fray Luis, Ercilla, Saint Theresa, Saint John of the Cross, Góngora, Cervantes, Balbuena, Quevedo, Lope, Tirso, Ruiz de Alarcón, Calderón, Saavedra Fajardo, Gracián, El Greco, Velázquez, Moratín, Goya, Quintana, Espronceda, Bécquer,

⁴⁰ César Vallejo (1892-1938), the Peruvian poet, wrote the finest poetry to come out of the Spanish Civil War, his posthumous *España, España de mi este cdliz* (1939) (*Spain, Take This Cup from Me*, trans. Clayton Fushman and José Rubia Barcia [New York, 1974]). The Cuban poet, Pablo de la Torriente Brau, gave his life in 1936 fighting for the Spanish Republic. He was memorialized by a great Spanish poet, Miguel Hernández (1910-1942), who, in turn, was imprisoned by Franco at the conclusion of the Civil War in 1939 and died in jail three years later. — Trans.

Rosalía de Castro, Valera, Galdós, *Clarín*, Unamuno, Baroja, Valle-Inclán, *Azorín*, Antonio Machado, Juan Ramón, Miró, Picasso, Gómez de la Serna, Manuel de Falla, León Felipe, Moreno Villa, Lorca, Alberti, Buñuel, Miguel Hernández . . .

Is there any earthly reason why those infected with the Black Legend should presume to tell us that the error and horrors of Spanish reaction require us to forget what—in a parallel line—is also our heritage, should presume to make us ashamed of it? What sense does it make to pronounce the whole of a country's culture worthless because of the atrocities that certain sectors of that country once committed? Do we not admire Shakespeare, Shaw and Virginia Woolf in spite of the British Empire? Whitman, Twain, and Hemingway in spite of Yankee imperialism? Rebelais, Rimbaud, and Malraux in spite of French colonialism? Pushkin, Tolstoy, and Dostoyevsky in spite of the Czars? Goethe, Heine, and Brecht in spite of nazism? Dante, Leopardi or Pavese in spite of Fascism.⁴⁴ And even Kipling, Claudel, and Pound in spite of Kipling, Claudel, and Pound? The truth of the matter is that we are proud that what is Spanish is also ours; to do without it would not enrich us, it would leave us lamentably impoverished.

The exceptional case of José Martí suffices to demonstrate how the best of Spain's cultural heritage, mixed in with others, was transfigured in an American oeuvre. As Noël Salomon has pointed out, it is evident no one else in our America could create a vision of our culture's authenticity as encompassing and coherent; no one else could create an oeuvre as true to our aboriginal roots, as respectful of them and as loving, and as universally valid. No one was less likely to be blinded by the false and bloody light of an empire whose last chains he helped decisively to remove from our America. And yet, could a well-read reader fail to see that his modern, stylistically advanced, original, forward-looking work has its only artistic equivalent in the greatest writers of the Spanish Golden Age, writers whose work he knew and assimilated like no one else. Thus, Juan Marinello could speak of "José Martí's literary Spanishness."⁴⁵ Martí himself, referring to Quevedo, noted that "he plunged so far into the depths of the future that today we speak his language."

It was Martí who in *La edad de oro* [The Golden Age] taught the children of his America to love and respect Las Casas, who was Spanish ("as were his father and his mother"), to not confuse him with "those murdering conquistadors who must have come from hell—rather than Spain," who in his later years confessed:

Para Aragón, En España,
Tengo yo en mi corazón
Un lugar todo Aragón:

⁴⁴ The interested reader is advised to consult P. E. Russell, ed., *A Companion to Spanish Studies* (London, 1974), and Philip Ward, ed., *The Oxford Companion to Spanish Literature* (Oxford, 1978). — Trans.

Franco fiero fiel, sin saña
.....
Estimo a quien de un revés
Echa por tierra a un tirano;
Lo estimo si es un cubano;
Lo estimo si aragonés.
[For Spain's Aragon
There's a place in my heart
That's all Aragon:
Frank, fierce, faithful, free of hate
.....
I respect a man who
slaps a tyrant to the ground:
I respect him if he's Cuban;
I respect him if he's Aragonese].

It was he who, while making ready for Cuba's War of Independence, was able to distinguish between "the Spaniard who stores his treasure, which is his only country, back in Santander or Barcelona," and "the simple, open Spaniard who loves liberty just as we do, whose country is justice," the "good, liberal Spaniard . . . my Valencian father, my montañés bondsman," and exclaimed, "Let someone else attack these Spaniards: I will defend them all my life." This man gave us a lasting lesson on the nature of the relation between Spain and America.

Following in Martí's footsteps and adding some of their own are Nicolás Guillén, author of the "The Surname," the extraordinary and exemplary poem in which he evokes his "two grandfathers" (one African, the other Spanish); and Mirta Aguirre, who brought a superb Marxist perspective to the study of Cervantes, showing how our revolutionary scholars should study our enormous Spanish cultural heritage.⁴⁶ And need we recall that when the legendary but utterly real hero of our America, Che Guevara, left Cuba to fight "in other lands," he wrote that he felt "Rocinante's ribs" under his heels? Frankly, and finally, I think Federico de Onís was right when he wrote:

We may assume that, someday, everything Spain established in America will disappear, just like the political structure of its colonial organization and other things belonging to the past—which are gone from Spain, as well—but the seed that those Spaniards who had the will to be Americans planted, which doubtless was the deepest expressions of the Spanish people, which possessed the greatest strength of unity, universality, and liberty, which was best suited to changing and adapting to a new reality, that seed will survive whatever changes may take place on a continent whose destiny is forever to search for something greater.⁴⁷

Notes

Preface

1. Louis Althusser and Etienne Balibar, *Reading Capital*, trans. Ben Brewster (London, 1970), 14.

Caliban

1. See Yves Lacoste, *Les pays sous-développés* [The Underdeveloped Countries] (Paris, 1959), 82-84.
2. José Vasconcelos, *La raza cósmica* [The Cosmic Race] (1925). A Swedish summary of what is known on this subject can be found in Magnus Mörner's study, *La mezcla de razas en la historia de América Latina*, [The Mixture of Races in the History of Latin America], Jorge Piatigorsky (Buenos Aires, 1969). Here it is recognized that "no part of the world has witnessed such a gigantic mixing of races as the one that has been taking place in Latin America and the Caribbean [Why this division?] since 1492" (15). Of course, what interests me in these notes is not the irrelevant biological fact of the "races" but the historical fact of the "cultures"; see Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Race et histoire* [Race and History] [1952] (Paris, 1968).
3. Cited along with subsequent references to the *Diario* [Logbook], by Julio C. Salas, in *Etnografía americana: Los indios caribes—Estudio sobre el origen del mito de la antropofagia* [Latin-American Ethnography: The Carib Indians—A Study of the Myth of Anthropophagy] (Madrid, 1920). The book exposes "the irrationality of [the] charge that some American tribes devoured human flesh, maintained in the past by those interested in enslaving [the] Indians and repeated by the chroniclers and historians, many of whom were supporters of slavery" (211).
4. *La carta de Colón anunciando el descubrimiento del nuevo mundo, 15 de febrero—14 de marzo 1493* [Columbus's Letter Announcing the Discovery of the New World, 15 February—14 March 1493] (Madrid, 1956), 20.
5. Ezequiel Martínez Estrada, "El Nuevo Mundo, la Isla de Utopía y la Isla de Cuba" [The New

World, the Island of Utopia, and the Island of Cuba], *Casa de las Américas* 33 (November–December 1965); this issue is entitled *Homenaje a Ezequiel Martínez Estrada*.

6. *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald Frame (Stanford, Calif., 1965), 152.

7. *Ibid.*

8. In William Shakespeare, *Obras completas*, trans. Luis Astrana Marín (Madrid, 1961), 107–8.

9. For example, Jan Kott notes that "there have been learned shakespearean scholars who tried to interpret *The Tempest* as a direct autobiography, or as an allegorical political drama" (*Shakespeare, Our Contemporary*, trans. Boleslaw Taborski, 2d ed. (London, 1967), 240).

10. Ernest Renan, *Caliban: Suite de "La Tempête"*. "Drame Philosophique [Caliban: "The Tempest" Suite. A philosophical Drama] (Paris, 1878).

11. See V. Arthur Adamov, *La Commune de Paris (8 mars–28 mars 1871): Anthologie* [The Paris Commune (8 March–28 March 1871): An Anthology] (Paris, 1959), and, especially, Paul Lidsky, *Les écrivains contre la Commune* [Writers Against the Commune] (Paris, 1970).

12. Lidsky, Paul, *Les écrivains contre la Commune*, 82.

13. Cited by Aimé Césaire in *Discours sur le colonialisme* [An Address on Colonialism], 3d ed. (Paris 1955), 13. This is a remarkable work, and I have made extensive use of its main ideas in this essay. (A part of it has been translated into Spanish in *Casa de las Américas* 36–37 [May–August 1966], an issue dedicated to *África en América* [Africa in Latin America]).

14. *Ibid.*, 14–15.

15. See Roberto Fernández Retamar, "Modernismo, noventiocho, subdesarrollo" [Modernism, the Generation of 1898, Underdevelopment], paper read at the Third Congress of the International Association of Hispanists, Mexico City, August 1968; collected in *Ensayo de otro mundo* [Essay on a Different World], 2d ed. (Santiago, 1969).

16. Quoted in José Enrique Rodó, *Obras completas* [Complete Works], ed. Emir Rodríguez Monegal (Madrid, 1957), 193; this volume will hereafter be cited by page number in the text.

17. See Jean Franco, *The Modern Culture of Latin America: Society and the Artist* (London, 1967), 49.

18. José Vasconcelos, *Indología* [Indology], 2d ed. (Barcelona, n.d.), XXIII.

19. Mario Benedetti, *Genio y figura de José Enrique Rodó* [A Portrait of José Enrique Rodó] (Buenos Aires, 1966), 95.

20. The penetrating but negative vision of Jan Kott causes him to be irritated by this fact. "Renan saw Demos in Caliban; in his continuation of *The Tempest* he took him to Milan and made him attempt another, victorious coup against Prospero. Guéhenno wrote an apology for Caliban-People. Both these interpretations are flat and do not do justice to Shakespeare's Caliban" (*Shakespeare, Our Contemporary*, 273).

21. Guéhenno's weakness in approaching this theme with any profundity is apparent from his increasingly contradictory prefaces to successive editions of the book (2d ed., 1945; 3d ed., 1962) down to his book of essays *Caliban et Prospero* [Caliban and Prospero] (Paris, 1969), where according to one critic, Guéhenno is converted into "a personage of bourgeois society and beneficiary of its culture," who judges Prospero "more equitably than in the days of *Caliban parle*" (Pierre Henri Simon, in *Le Monde*, 5 July, 1969).

22. See Michael Lowy, *La pensée de Che Guevara* [Che Guevara's Thought] (Paris, 1970), 19.

23. Aníbal Ponce, *Humanismo burgués y humanismo proletario* [Bourgeois Humanism and Proletarian Humanism] (Havana, 1962), 83.

24. J. L. Zimmerman, *Países pobres, países ricos: La brecha que se ensancha* [Poor Countries, Rich Countries: The Breech that is Widening], trans. G. González Aramburo (Mexico City, 1966), 7.

25. O. Mannoni, *Psychologie de la colonisation* [The Psychology of Colonialism] (Paris, 1950), 71; quoted by Frantz Fanon, in *Peau noire, masques blancs* [Black Skin, White Masks], 2d ed. (Paris [c. 1965]), 106.

26. George Lamming, *The Pleasured of Exile* (London, 1960), 109. In commenting on these opinions of Lamming, the German Janheinz Jahn observes their limitations and proposes an identification of Caliban/negritude (see *Neo-African Literature*, trans. O. Coburn and U. Lehrburger [New York, 1968], 239–42).

27. John Wain, *The Living World of Shakespeare* (New York, 1964), 226–27.

28. See Aimé Césaire, *Une tempête: Adaptation de "La Tempête" de Shakespeare pour un théâtre nègre* [A Tempest: An Adaptation of Shakespeare's "The Tempest" for a Black Theater] (Paris, 1969); Edward Bradwaite, *Islands* (London, 1969); Roberto Fernández Retamar, "Cuba hasta Fidel" [Cuba until Fidel], *Bohemia*, 19 September 1969.

29. The new reading of *The Tempest* has become a common one throughout the colonial world of today. I want only, therefore, to mention a few examples. On concluding these notes, I find a new one in the essay by James Ngugi (of Kenya), "Africa y la descolonización cultural" [Africa and Cultural Decolonization], in *El correo* (January 1971).

30. "It is improper," Benedetti has said, "to confront Rodó with present-day structures, statements, and ideologies. His time was different from ours[. . .] his true place, his true temporal homeland was the nineteenth century" (*Genio y figura de José Enrique Rodó*, 128).

31. *Ibid.*, 109. Even greater emphasis on the current validity of Rodó will be found in Arturo Ardao's book *Rodó: Su americanismo* [Rodó: His Americanism] (Montevideo, 1970), which includes an excellent anthology of the author of *Ariel*. On the other hand, as early as 1928, José Carlos Mariátegui, after rightly recalling that "only a socialist Latin or Ibero-America can effectively oppose a capitalist, plutocratic, and imperialist North America," adds, "The myth of Rodó has not yet acted — nor has it ever acted — usefully and fruitfully upon our souls" ("Aniversario y balance" [An Anniversary and a Summing Up] [1928], in *Ideología y política* [Ideology and Politics] [Lima, 1969], 248).

32. *Hombres de la revolución: Julio Antonio Mella* [Men of the Revolution: Julio Antonio Mella] (Havana, 1971), 12.

33. *Ibid.*, 15.

34. See Erasmo Dumperie, *Mella* (Havana, c. 1965), 145; see also José Antonio Portuondo, "Mella y los intelectuales" [Mella and the Intellectuals] [1963], which is reproduced in *Casa de las Américas*, no. 68 (1971).

35. Emir Rodríguez Monegal, ed., *Rodó* (Madrid, 1957), 193–93; my emphasis.

36. Medardo Viter, *Del ensayo americano* [On the Latin-American Essay] (Mexico City, 1945), 117.

37. Fidel Castro, speech, 19 April 1971.

38. See Kott, *Shakespeare, Our Contemporary*, 269.

39. See Ezequiel Martínez Estrada, "Por una alta cultura popular y socialista cubana" [Toward a Cuban Popular and Socialist High Culture] [1962], in *En Cuba y al servicio de la Revolución cubana* [In Cuba and at the Service of the Cuban Revolution] (Havana, 1963); "Martí en su (tercer) mundo" [Martí in his (Third) World] [1964], in *Ensayo de otro mundo, Cuba Socialista* 41 (January 1965); Noël Salomon, "José Martí et la prise de conscience latinoaméricaine" [José Martí and Latin America's Coming to Consciousness], *Cuba* 35–36 (4th trimester 1970–1st trimester 1971); and Leonardo Acosta, "La concepción histórica de Martí," [Martí's Idea of History], *Casa de las Américas* 67 (July–August 1971).

40. Pedro Henríquez Ureña, *Obra crítica* [Critical Work] (Mexico City, 1960), 27.

41. Ivan Schulman (Martí, Casal y el modernismo [Martí, Casal, and Modernism] [Havana, 1969] 92) has discovered that it had been previously published on 10 January 1891, in *La Revista Ilustrada de Nueva York*.

42. Manuel Pedro González, "Evolución de la estimativa mariana" [The Evolution of Martí's Critical Tools], in *Antología crítica de José Martí* [Critical Anthology of José Martí], comp. and ed. Manuel Pedro González (Mexico City, 1960), xxix.

43. Nonetheless, this should not be understood to mean that I am suggesting that those authors who have not been born in the colonies should not be read. Such a stupidity is untenable. How could we propose to ignore Homer, Dante, Cervantes, Shakespeare, Whitman, to say nothing of Marx, Engels, or Lenin? How can we forget that even in our own day there are *Latin American* thinkers who have not been born here? Lastly, how can we defend intellectual Robinson Crusoeism at all without falling into the greatest absurdity?

44. José Martí, "Autores aborígenes americanos" [1884], in *Obras completas*, 8:336-37; hereafter cited as "AAA" in the text.

45. For instance, to Tamanaco he dedicated a beautiful poem, "Tamanaco of the Plumed Crown," in *Obras completas*, 22:237.

46. José Martí, "Fragmentos" [Fragments] [1885-95], in *Obras completas*, 22:27.

47. *Ibid.*, 28-29.

48. See, for example, José Martí, "Mi raza" [My Race] in *Obras completas*, 2:298-300, where we read:

An individual has no special right because he belongs to one race or another: to speak of a human being is to speak of all rights. . . . If one says that in the black there is no aboriginal fault or virus that incapacitates him from leading his human life to the full, one is speaking the truth . . . , and if this defense of nature is called racism, the name does not matter; for it is nothing if not natural decency and the voice crying from the breast of the human being for the peace and life of the country. If it be alleged that the condition of slavery does not suggest any inferiority of the enslaved race, since white Gauls with blue eyes and golden hair were sold as slaves with iron rings around their necks in the markets of Rome, that is good racism because it is pure justice and helps to remove the prejudices of the ignorant white man. But there righteous racism ends.

And, further on, "A human being is more than white, more than mulatto, more than black. Cuban is more than white, more than mulatto, more than black." Some of these questions are treated in Juliette Oullion's paper, "La discriminación racial en los Estados Unidos vista por José Martí," [Racial Discrimination in the United States as seen by José Martí], *Anuario martiniano* (Havana, 1971), which I was unable to use, since it appeared after these notes were completed.

49. See *Casa de las Américas* 36-37 (May-August 1966), a special issue entitled *Africa en América* [Africa in Latin America].

50. I refer to the dialogue within Latin America itself, the despicable opinion that America earned in Europe's eyes can be followed in some detail in Antonello Gerbi's vast work, *La disputa del Nuevo Mundo: Historia de una polémica, 1750-1900* [The Dispute over the New World: The History of a Polemic, 1750-1900], trans. Antonio Alatorre (Mexico City, 1960).

51. José Martí, "Una Distribución de diplomas en un colegio de los Estados Unidos" [Graduation Day at a School in the United States] [1884], in *Obras completas*, 7:442.

52. Retamar, *Ensayo de otro mundo* (see n. 15 above), 15.

53. "Sarmiento, the real founder of the Republic of Argentina," Martí says of him, for example, in a letter dated 7 April 1887 to Fermín Valdés Domínguez, shortly after a warm literary elegy that the Argentinean had publicly make to him (*Obras completas*, 20:325). Nevertheless, it is significant that Martí, always so mindful of Latin American values, *did not publish a single work on Sarmiento*, not even on the occasion of his death in 1888. It is difficult not to relate this silence to Martí's often reiterated criterion that silence was his way of censoring.

54. Ezequiel Martínez Estrada, "El colonialismo como realidad" [Colonialism as a Reality], *Casa de las Américas* 33 (November-December 1965): 85. These pages originally appeared in his book *Diferencias y semejanzas entre los países de la América Latina* [Differences and Similarities Among Countries of Latin America] (Mexico City, 1962) and were written in that country in 1960; that is to say, after the triumph of the Cuban Revolution, which led Martínez Estrada to make considerable restatements of his ideas. See, for example, his "Retrato de Sarmiento" [A Portrait of Sar-

miento), a lecture given at the Biblioteca Nacional de Cuba on 8 December 1961. In it he said, "A rigorous and impartial study of the political behavior of Sarmiento in government effectively verifies the fact that many of the evils characterizing the oligarchic politics of Argentina were introduced by him"; and also "He was contemptuous of the people, he was contemptuous of the ignorant masses, the ill-clad masses, without understanding that this is the American people" (*Revista de la Biblioteca Nacional* [July-September 1965]: 14, 16).

55. Jaime Alazraki, "El indigenismo de Martí y el antiindigenismo de Sarmiento" [Martí's Indigenism and Sarmiento's anti-Indigenism], *Cuadernos Americanos* (May-June 1965). The conclusion of this essay—and almost the same quotations—appear in the work of Antonio Sacoto, "El indio en la obra literaria de Sarmiento y Martí" [The Indian in the Literary Work of Sarmiento and Martí], *Cuadernos Americanos* (January-February 1968).

56. José Martí, "La verdad sobre los Estados Unidos" [The Truth about the United States], in *Páginas escogidas* [Selected Pages], ed. Roberto Fernández Retamar (Havana, 1971), 1:392.

57. *Ibid.*, 149.

58. Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, *Páginas literarias* [Literary Pages], vol. 46 of *Obras completas* [Complete Works] (Santiago-Buenos Aires, 1885-1902), 166-73.

59. Emeterio S. Santovenia, *Genio y acción: Sarmiento y Martí* [Genius and Action: Sarmiento and Martí] (Havana, 1938), 73.

60. Jorge Luis Borges, *El tamaño de mi esperanza* [The Size of my Hope] (Buenos Aires, 1926), 5, 6.

61. On the ideological evolution of Borges with respect to his class attitudes, see Eduardo López-Morales, "Encuentro con un destino sudamericano" [An Encounter with a South American Destiny], in *Recopilación de textos sobre los vanguardismos en la América Latina* [A Collection of Texts on Latin-American Avant-Gardes], ed. Oscar Collazos (Havana, 1970); and, for a Marxist approach to the author, see Jaime Mejía Duque, "De nuevo Jorge Luis Borges" [Jorge Luis Borges Once Again], in *Literatura y realidad* [Literature and Reality] (Medellín, 1969).

62. Jorge Luis Borges, "El escritor argentino y la tradición" [The Argentine Writer and Tradition], *Sur* 232 (January-February 1955): 7.

63. José Carlos Mariátegui, "Antisario y balance" [An Anniversary and a Summing Up], in *Ideología y política* [Ideology and Politics] (Lima, 1969), 248.

64. Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, *El desafío americano* [The American Challenge] (Havana, 1968), 41.

65. Carlos Fuentes, *La muerte de Artemio Cruz* [The Death of Artemio Cruz] (Mexico City, 1962), 27.

66. No one has preserved a copy of the manifesto. There does exist, however, a copy of the article in which Ezequiel Martínez Estrada responded to it: "Réplica a una declaración intemperante" [Reply to an Intemperate Statement], in *En Cuba y al servicio de la Revolución cubana*.

67. I have dealt further with this point in "Intercomunicación y nueva literatura" [Intercommunication and New Literature], in *América Latina en su literatura* [Latin America in Its Literature], ed. César Fernández Moreno (Mexico City, 1972).

68. Carlos Fuentes, *La nueva novela hispanoamericana* [The new Latin American novel] (Mexico City, 1969), 10; hereafter cited by page number in the text.

69. Tzvetan Todorov, "Formalistes et futuristes" [Formalists and Futurists], *Tel Quel* 30 (1968): 43. And see Krystina Pomorska, *Russian Formalist Theory and Its Poetic Ambiance* (The Hague, 1968).

70. Carlos-Peregrín Otero, *Introducción a la lingüística transformacional* [Introduction to Transformational Linguistics] (Mexico City, 1970), 1.

71. Ambrosio Fornet's analysis of the publication, in "New World in español" [New World in Spanish], *Casa de las Américas* 40 (January-February 1967), has lost none of its validity.

Caliban Revisited

72. Vilfredo Pareto, *Trattato di sociologia generale* [Treatise on General Sociology] (Florence, 1916); cited in José Carlos Mariátegui, *Ideología y política*, 24.
73. Alfonso Reyes, "Notas sobre la inteligencia americana" [Notes on the Latin America Intellect], in *Obras completas* [Complete Works] (Mexico City, 1960), 11:88n.
74. *Ibid.*, 90.
75. José Martí, "Cuaderno de apuntes—5" [Notebook—5] [1881], in *Obras completas*, 21:164.
76. Ezequiel Martínez Estrada, "El colonialismo como realidad" (see n. 54 above), 85.
77. José Carlos Mariátegui, *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (Seven Interpretative Essays on Peruvian Reality) (Havana, 1964), xii.
78. "Intellectual" in the broad sense of the word, as employed by Gramsci in his classic pages on the subject, to which I heartily subscribe. As they are sufficiently known, I do not feel it necessary to comment on them here; see Antonio Gramsci, "The Intellectuals," in *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Smith (New York, 1971). In the preparatory seminar for the Cultural Congress of Havana, 1967, the word was used by us in this same broad sense and, recently, Fidel has taken up the question again in the first National Congress on Education and Culture. There he rejected the notion that such a denomination be enjoyed by a small group of "witch doctors" that "has monopolized the title of intellectual," to the exclusion of "teachers, engineers, technicians, researchers . . ."
79. Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (New York, 1948), 20.
80. We would do well to recall here that more than forty years ago Mariátegui wrote, "this is a moment in our history when it is not possible, in effect, to be nationalist and revolutionary without also being socialist" (*Siete ensayos*, 26n).
81. For a more recent discussion of this with respect to writers, see, in particular, Mario Benedetti, "Las prioridades del escritor" [The Writer's Priorities] *Casa de las Américas* 68 (September–October 1971).
82. Mariátegui, "Aniversario y balance" (see n. 63 above), 249.
83. See "Diez años de revolución: El intelectual y la sociedad" [Ten Years of Revolution: The Intellectual and Society], *Casa de las Américas* 56 (September–October 1969); also published under the title *El intelectual y la sociedad* [The Intellectual and Society] (Mexico City, 1969).
84. Fidel Castro, *Palabras a los intelectuales* [Words to the Intellectuals] (Havana, 1961), 5.
85. Although a certain narrow conception of socialist realism—which Che rejects in his article along with the phony vanguardism attributed to capitalist art today and its negative influence among us—has not damaged our art in the way he suggested, some harm has been done by an extemporaneous fear of the conception. The process has been described thus: For ten years Cuban novelists eluded skillfully the dangers of a narrative that would lead to schematicism and paralysis. On the other hand, the greater portion of their works evince an air of timidity from which poetry and documentary film, for example, have freed themselves (and from which the writer of short stories will perhaps free himself). . . . [If the new narrative, given the climate of artistic freedom in which it developed, had passed through an epic phase of ingenuous exaltation of reality, perhaps it might have discovered at least its own tone, which would have demanded in turn the discovery of new forms. That way we would be able to discuss today, in a manner of speaking, epic vanguardism in the Cuban narrative. . . . The danger should have been incurred *proceeding from a fall*, instead of attempting to avoid one, for the fact that one does not *fall* into pamphletism does not guarantee that he will escape mimetism and mediocrity. (Ambrosio Fornet, "A propósito de Sacchario" [On Sacchario] *Casa de las Américas* 64 (January–February 1971))
86. Ernesto Che Guevara, "Que la universidad se pinte de negro, de mulato, de obrero, de campesino" [Paint the University Black, Mulatto, Worker, Peasant], in *Obras, 1957–1967* [Works, 1957–1967] (Havana 1970), 2:37–38.
1. That he is little-read in English can be gathered from Edward W. Said's article, "Swift as Intellectual," *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (Cambridge, Mass. 1983). I can attest to the fact that in Spanish it is even more the case. I am, however, pleased to point out Beatriz Maggi's article on Swift, "Pamfletos y literatura" [Pamphlet and Literature], in *Pamfletos y literatura* [Pamphlet and Literature] (Havana, 1982), from which I took the great Irish writer's epitaph.
2. Naturally, this does not imply the slightest disdain toward children's literature; I simply wish to point out the transmutation of a work's meaning.
3. *The 60s Without Apology*. See Sohnya Sayres, Anders Stephenson, Stanley Aronowitz, and Fredric Jameson, eds., (Minneapolis, 1984).
4. See Christopher Lasch, "The Cultural Cold War: A Short History of the Congress for Cultural Freedom," in *Towards a New Past: Dissenting Essays in American History*, ed. Barton J. Bernstein (New York, 1967).
5. See Ambrosio Fornet, "New World en español" [New World in Spanish], *Casa de las Américas*, 40, (January–February, 1967).
6. See Mario Vargas Llosa, *Contra viento y marea* (1962–1982) [Against Wind and Tide (1962–1982)] (Barcelona, 1983).
7. Mario Vargas Llosa, "Epitafio para un imperio cultural" [Epitaph for a Cultural Empire], *Marcha*, 27 May 1967, 31.
8. *Libre: Revista crítica trimestral del mundo de habla española* [Free: A Quarterly Critical Review of the Spanish-speaking World], no. 1 (September–November [1971]): 95–96; my emphasis.
9. Julio Cortázar to Haydée Santamaría, 2 February 1972, *Casa de las Américas* 145–146 (July–October, 1984): 148, my emphasis. (The issue was in honor of our beloved Julio Cortázar on the occasion of his death.)
10. As is well known, Padilla and his wife, Belkis Cuza, are involved in an active and clownish counterrevolutionary campaign outside of Cuba. It is less well known that comrades Díaz Martínez, César López and Pablo Armando Fernández—who were accused by Padilla—live and work under normal conditions in Cuba and frequently represent the country abroad.
11. Vargas Llosa, *Contra viento y marea*, 166–67.
12. Julio Cortázar: "Apuntes al margen de una lectura de 1984" [Marginal Notations to a Reading of 1984], in *Nicaragua tan violentamente dulce* [Nicaragua So Violently Sweet] (Barcelona, 1984), 13.
13. Vargas Llosa, *Contra viento y marea*, 166.
14. The latter two pieces were lengthened and published with the respective titles "Introducción a José Martí" [Introduction to José Martí] and "Para leer al Che" [For a Reading of Che].
15. See Roger Toussion, "Caliban/Cannibale ou les avatars d'un cannibalisme anagrammatique," in *Trois Calibans*, (Havana, 1981), 201–99. Although I do not deny the value that Toussion's research and speculations might have for other purposes, the use that Louis-Jean Calvet makes of my text in *Linguistique et colonialisme. Petit traité de glottologie*. [Linguistics and Colonialism: A Short Treatise on Glottology] (Paris, 1974), 59, 223–24, is much closer to its original intent.
16. Emir Rodríguez Monegal, "Las metamorfosis de Caliban" [The Metamorphoses of Caliban], which appeared in English in the American academic journal *Diacritics* (no. 7 [1977]), and in Spanish in the Mexican political review *Viuela*.
17. Lamming's book *The Pleasures of Exile*, a second edition of which was published in London in 1984, merits far more attention than I could give it in "Caliban."
18. See J. M. Cohen, *Jorge Luis Borges* (Edinburgh, 1973), 107–9.
19. The best piece I've read on the political presuppositions of Borges's work is Julio Rodríguez-Luis's "La intención política en la obra de Borges: Hacia una visión de conjunto" [The Political Intention of Borges's Work: Toward an Overview], *Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos*, no. 361–362 (July–August 1980).

20. Jorge Alberto Manrique, "Ariel entre Próspero y Calibán," *Revista de la Universidad de México* (February-March 1972): 70.

21. These friends were, individually, John Beverley, Ambrosio Fornet, and Desiderio Navarro; my thanks to them for the information. And see Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York, 1978).

Against the Black Legend

1. Ramón Menéndez Pidal, "La unidad del idioma" [The Unity of the Language] [1944], in *Castilla, la tradición, el idioma* [Castile, the Tradition, the Language], 3d ed. (Madrid, 1955), 205.

2. *Ibid.*, 192. On this question of the language, which has engendered so much nonsense on both sides of the Atlantic, see, in addition, Arnado Alonso, *El problema de la lengua en América* [The Problem of Language in America] (Madrid, 1935), and Castellano, español, idioma nacional: *Historia espiritual de tres nombres* [Castilian, Spanish, National Language: The Spiritual History of Three Names] (Buenos Aires, 1943); and Angel Rosenblat, *El castellano de España y el castellano de América: Unidad y diferenciación* [Spain's Castilian and America's Castilian: Unity and Differentiation] (Caracas, 1962). Rosenblat notes in his enjoyable essay that "as against the inevitable diversity of popular and familiar speech, learned speech in Spanish America is strikingly similar to that of Spain. The similarity seems far greater than that of United States English or Brazilian Portuguese to the language of the former metropolis" (46).

3. Pierre Vilar, *Spain: A Brief History*, trans. Brian Tate (London, 1967), 36, 35.

4. Fernando Ortiz, "La 'leyenda negra' contra Fray Bartolomé" [The Black Legend Against Father Bartolomé], *Cuadernos Americanos* (September-October 1952): 146.

5. Alejandro Lipschütz, *El problema racial en la conquista de América y el mestizaje* [The Racial Problem in the Conquest of America and the Mestizo Question] (Santiago, 1963), 229.

6. Alejandro Lipschütz, *Marx y Lenin en la América Latina y los problemas indígenas* [Marx and Lenin in Latin America and the Native American Problem] (Havana, 1974), 170-71.

7. Laurette Sejourne, *América Latina*, vol. 1, *Antiguas culturas precolombinas* [Latin America, vol. 1, Ancient Pre-Colombian Cultures], trans. Josefina Oliva de Coll (Madrid, 1971), 8-9.

8. Julio Le Riverend, "Problemas históricos de la conquista de América: Las Casas y su tiempo" [Historical Problems of the Conquest of America: Las Casas and his Times], *Casa de las Américas* 85 (July-August 1974): 4.

9. Karl Marx, "The Future of British Domination in India," in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *On Colonialism*, (Moscow, 1963), 97.

10. Karl Marx, "The So-called Primitive Accumulation" in *Capital* (New York, 1977), 1.8.760.

11. Quevedo, who was born in 1580, eight years before the defeat of the Invincible Armada, sensed the beginning of this process and reflected on it in his enormous, bitter, and genial work. In one of his best-known sonnets he wrote: "And it is far easier, oh Spain, in many ways, / that what you alone seized from all, / all in turn will seize from you alone," [Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas (1580-1645) was one of the greatest poets of the *Siglo de Oro*, the golden age of Spanish letters. — Translators' note.]

12. "In general, the concealed slavery of wage workers in Europe required, as a prop, slavery *sans phrase* — in the New World." (Marx, "The So-called Primitive Accumulation,") in *Capital*, 1.8.760.

13. See Julián Juderías, *La leyenda negra: Estudios acerca del concepto de España en el extranjero* [The Black Legend. Studies on Foreign Countries' Idea of Spain] (Madrid, 1914), and *Historia de la leyenda negra hispanoamericana* [History of the Spanish-American Black Legend] (Madrid, 1944), by the Argentinian Rómulo D. Carbia. It is not by chance that right-wing extremists in Spain and many foreign reactionaries have yielded to this "defense" of Spain with the same zeal they usually employ to justify more "modern" depredations.

14. Lenin wrote in his *Critical Remarks on the National Question* (1913):

"The elements of democratic and socialist culture are present, if only in rudimentary form, in every national culture, since in every nation there are toiling and exploited masses, whose conditions of life inevitably give rise to the ideology of democracy and socialism. But every nation also possesses a bourgeois culture (and most nations a reactionary and clerical culture as well) in the form, not merely of 'elements,' but of the *dominant* culture. Therefore, the general 'national culture' is the culture of the landlords, the clergy and the bourgeoisie. [In *Collected Works* (Moscow, 1964), 20:24]

15. During the early years of the October Revolution and against the Proletkult's intention to pass over or reject prerevolutionary culture in toto and create a new "proletarian" culture, Lenin reiterated that "this proletarian culture can only be created knowing precisely the culture created by the whole of humanity during the course of its development and transforming it. . . . Proletarian culture has to be the logical development of the storehouse of knowledge conquered by humanity under the yoke of capitalist society, of landowning society, and of bureaucratic society. All of these roads and paths have led and continue to lead to the proletarian culture" ("Tasks of the Communist Youth Leagues," 1920). These ideas are repeated and extended in, for example, Lenin's essay "On Proletarian Culture" of the same year; in general, they provided guidance on questions of culture for the gigantic Leninist task of founding the first socialist state.

16. From the viewpoint of a liberal, Fidelino de Figueiredo wrote on this question of the "two Spains" — one of the Right, the other of the Left — in his book *As duas Espanhas* (1932; Lisbon, 1936).

17. E. G. Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 2d ed. (London and Dar-es-Salaam, 1973).

18. Américo Castro, *España en su historia: Cristianos, moros, y judíos* [Spain in Its History: Christians, Moors, and Jews] (Buenos Aires, 1948), 14-15.

19. Ramón Menéndez Pidal, *España, eslabón entre la cristiandad y el Islam* [Spain, the Link between Christendom and Islam] (Madrid, 1956).

20. Miguel Asín Palacios, *Dante y el Islam* [Dante and Islam] (Madrid, 1927), 16.

21. José Luciano Franco, "Transculturación afrohispánica" [Afro-Hispanic Transculturalization], *Santiago* 17 (March 1975): 50-56. See also on this point Fernando Henriques, "The European Image of the Non-European," in *Children of Caliban* (London, 1974), esp. 14, 15.

22. Bolívar was conscious of this fact: "Spain itself, by virtue of its African blood, its institutions, its character, ceases to be European," he told the Congress of Angostura in 1819. Far from offending, such a fact contributed to the American originality he was to proclaim proudly four years later: "We are humankind in miniature." In addition, it is well known how much "the Arab element" of Spanish culture attracted Martí. Spain's *otherness* or heterodoxy, has always interested the great creators of our America.

23. "The history of early Christianity has notable points of resemblance with the modern working-class movement." To Anton Menger's question of why socialism did not follow the fall of the Roman Empire in the West, Engels replies that "this 'socialism' did in fact, as far as it was possible at the time, exist and even become dominant — in Christianity. Only this Christianity, as was bound to be the case in the historical conditions, did not want to accomplish a social transformation in this world, but beyond it, in heaven, in eternal life after death, in the impending 'millennium.'" (Frederick Engels, "On the History of Early Christianity," in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *On Religion*, [New York, 1969], 316-17. See also his preface to Marx's *Class Struggles in France*).

24. Vilar, *Spain* (see n. 3 above), 44.

25. Jacques Arnault, *Historia del colonialismo* [History of Colonialism], trans. Raúl Sciarreta (Buenos Aires, 1960) 10; originally published as *Processus du colonialisme* (Paris, 1958).

26. "Entrevista con Jean-Paul Sartre" [Interview with Jean-Paul Sartre] in *Libre* 4 (1974), 10. Note that this publication, whose subtitle was *A Quarterly Critical Review of the Spanish-Speaking World*, let this remark pass without the slightest criticism or comment.

27. Jean-Jacques Foll, "Notes de lecture" [Critical Notes], *Europe* (January-February 1974): 286.
28. Manuel Galich, "El indio y el negro, ahora y antes" [Indians and blacks, Then and Now], *Casa de las Américas* 36-37 (May-August 1966), a special issue on *Africa in America*.
29. Fernando Ortiz, prologue to José Antonio Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana en el Nuevo Mundo y en especial en los países americano-hispanos* [History of Black Slavery in the New World and Especially in the Countries of Spanish America] (Havana, 1938), 1:lix.
30. See Ortiz, "La 'leyenda negra'" (n. 4 above); see also Silvio Zavala, "Las Casas, esclavista?" [Las Casas, a Slaveholder?], *Cuadernos Americanos* (March-April 1944) and Juan Comas, "Fray Bartolomé, la esclavitud y el racismo" [Fray Bartolomé, Slavery and Racism], *Cuadernos Americanos* (March-April 1976).
31. Ortiz, "La 'leyenda negra,'" 183-84.
32. Unfortunately, Menéndez Pidal has also repeatedly contributed to this anti-Las Casas legend in "¿Codicia insaciable? '¿Ilustres hazñas?' " [Insatiable Greed? Illustrious Deeds?] (1940), in *La lengua de Cristóbal Colón: El estilo de Santa Teresa y otros estudios del siglo XVI* [The Language of Christopher Columbus. Saint Theresa's Style and Other Studies on the Sixteenth Century] (Buenos Aires, 1942); "Victoria y Las Casas" [Victoria and Las Casas], (1956), and "Una norma anormal del Padre Las Casas" [An Abnormal Norm of Father Las Casas] in *El Padre Las Casas y la leyenda negra* [Father Las Casas and the Black Legend] (Madrid, 1958); and *El padre Las Casas: su doble personalidad* [Father Las Casas: His Dual Personality] (Madrid 1963); Menéndez Pidal compares Las Casas negatively to Bernal Díaz and Vitoria, and wildly accuses him of slander and of having "established, intensified and perpetuated the Black Legend" (*El padre Las Casas y la leyenda negra*, p. 11), and states that he was anti-black, a slaver, and, finally . . . paranoid. Lipschultz responded to the latter charge in "La paranoia y el histerismo de los profetas" [Paranoia and the Hysteria of the Prophets], *Marx and Lenin en la América Latina*, see n. 6. On this and other historical points, the eminent philologist, otherwise the very soul of objectivity, proves to be the heir of another great Spanish fanatic and polymath, Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo. The latter's sadly reactionary criteria do not, however, invalidate his enormous work which, despite its author's ideology, should not be left in the hands of Spanish reactionaries. It is still an arsenal of the most varied thoughts. An attempt to distinguish between what is alive and what is dead in that great oeuvre was made by Guillermo de Torre in *Menéndez y Pelayo y las dos Españas* (Buenos Aires, 1943) (unfortunately, a rather poor attempt, due to the habitual superficiality of its author). After reading this little book, one is convinced of the importance of doing a more serious job on this matter.

33. See for example, J. Vincens Vives, ed., *Historia de España y América* [History of Spain and Latin America] (Barcelona, 1961), especially 3:250-386; and Le Riverend, "Problemas históricos de la conquista de América" [Historical Problems of the Conquest of America] (see n. 8 above).

34. Vilar, *Spain*, 27, 39, 46, 47.

35. In his spiritedly bookish youth, Menéndez Pelayo tried to deny this fact (see *La ciencia española* [Spanish Science] [1876]). But in 1894 he already recognized the decadent state of Spanish science of his time ("Esplendor y decadencia de la cultura científica española" [The Splendor and Decadence of Spanish Scientific Culture], in *Antología del pensamiento de lengua española en la Edad Contemporánea* [Anthology of Contemporary Thought in the Spanish-speaking World], ed. José Gaos [Mexico City, 1945]). For his part, Santiago Ramón y Cajal, with the authority given to him by his great scientific work on the international level, affirms that the output of Spanish science, judged globally, "has been poor and discontinuous, visibly backward in comparison to the rest of Europe, and, especially, of a deplorable theoretical wretchedness" ("Nuestro atraso cultural y sus causas pretendidas" [Our Cultural Backwardness and its Supposed Causes], in *El concepto contemporáneo de España: Antología de ensayos (1895-1931)* [The Contemporary Concept of Spain: An Anthology of Essays (1895-1931)], ed. Angel del Río and M. J. Benardete [Buenos Aires, 1946], 46).

36. Manuel Tuñón de Lara, *La España del siglo XIX* [Nineteenth-century Spain], 4th ed. (Barcelona, 1973), 10.
37. Roberto Mesa, *El colonialismo en la crisis del siglo XIX español* [Colonialism in the Crisis of Nineteenth-century Spain] (Madrid, 1967), 12-13.
38. In the *Gaos Antología* (see n. 35 above) there is a good overview of thought on Spain's decadence and the independence movement in America.
39. Karl Marx, "Revolutionary Spain," written for the *New York Daily Tribune*, 9 September 1854.
40. Roberto Mesa, "Prólogo a la edición española" [Prologue to the Spanish Edition], in *El anti-colonialismo europeo desde Las Casas a Marx* [European Anticolonialism from Las Casas to Marx], ed. Marcel Merle and Roberto Mesa (Madrid, 1972), 8. As high representatives of that "moment," we must also mention the chroniclers of Indian cultures like Sahagún (*Cronistas de las culturas precolombinas* [Chroniclers of pre-Columbian Cultures], comp. and ed. Luis Nicolau d'Oliver [Mexico City, 1963]).
41. See Marcel Bataillon's outstanding *Erasmus y España: Estudios sobre la historia española del siglo XVI* [Erasmus and Spain: Studies on sixteenth-century Spanish history], trans. Antonio Alatorre (Mexico City, 1950), especially the appendix, "Erasmus y el Nuevo Mundo" [Erasmus and the New World], 2: 435-54.
42. See Juan López Morillas, *El krausismo español: Perfil de una aventura intelectual* [Spanish Krausism: Profile of an Intellectual Adventure] (Mexico City, 1956). Arturo Andrés Roig has provided an example for scholars in other Spanish-American countries with his book *Los krausistas argentinos* [The Argentine Krausists] (Puebla, 1969).
43. Carlos Blanco Aguina has studied in a useful book, *Juventud del 98* [The Youth of the Generation of 1898] (Madrid, 1970), how the writers grouped under the label "the Generation of '98" approached "the problem of Spain" between 1890 and 1905 from radical sociopolitical prospects that went from intransigent federalism to Marxism (xii) and how in their capacity as petty-bourgeois intellectuals "acabaron volviendo, cada uno en su modo, a recogerse en el seno de la sociedad establecida" ["ended up returning, each in his own way, to take refuge in the bosom of established society"] (326).
44. We do not mention Portugal here, despite its known contributions to world art and literature, because that country has suffered the lash of the anti-Spanish Black Legend, a legend with a definite anti-Iberian form. Of course, we must not forget that "Portugal is not a Spanish problem, and it is as alien and as close to greater Spain as Poland is to Russia, Belgium to France. . . . It is not part of either of the two Spains" (Fidelino de Figueiredo, *Las dos Españas* [see n. 16 above], 271, 276). The Black Legend has affected other peoples of the Iberian Peninsula, the Basque, Galician, Catalan, even more strongly. They were oppressed by a reactionary Castilian Spain, against which they have never tired of fighting in search of a just federal solution.
45. Juan Marinello, "Sobre Martí escritor: La españolidad literaria de José Martí" [On Martí the writer: The literary Spanishness of José Martí], in *Vida y pensamiento de Martí: Homenaje a la ciudad de La Habana en el cincuentenario de la fundación del Partido Revolucionario Cubano, 1892-1942* [The Life and Thought of Martí: Homage to the City of Havana on the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Foundation of the Cuban Revolutionary Party, 1892-1942] (Havana, 1942). Guillermo Díaz-Piñá could affirm of Martí, that he is a "gigantic phenomenon of the Hispanic language, strong root of Ruben Dario's prose, and, without doubt, the first 'creator' of prose in the Hispanic world" (*Modernismo frente a noventa y ocho: Una introducción a la literatura española del siglo XX* [Modernism versus the Generation of 1898: An Introduction to Twentieth-century Spanish Literature] [Madrid, 1951], 305).
46. Mirta Aguirre, *La obra narrativa de Cervantes* [The Narrative Work of Cervantes] (Havana, 1971).

47. Federico de Onís, "La eternidad de España en América" [The Eternal Meaning of Spain in America], in *España en América* [Spain in America] (San Juan, 1968), 190.

Some Theoretical Problems of Spanish American Literature

1. Kurt Schnelle, "Acercas del problema de la novela latinoamericana" [Concerning the problem of the Latin-American Novel], in Kurt Schnelle et al., *El ensayo y la crítica literaria en Iberoamérica* [The Essay and Literary Criticism in Ibero-America] (Toronto, 1970), 162.

2. *Ibid.*, 163.

3. Mario Benedetti: "La palabra, esa nueva cartuja" [Language, the New Carthusian] in *Crítica cómplice* [Complicitous Criticism] (Havana, 1971), 36, 37. These concepts can be found in other works by Benedetti.

4. See, for example, Roberto Fernández Retamar, *Ensayo de otro mundo* [Essay on Another World] (Havana, 1967; 2d rev. ed., Santiago, 1969); "Diez años de revolución: el intelectual y la sociedad" [Ten years of Revolution: The Intellectuals and Society], *Casa de las Américas* 56 (September-October 1969), and separately in Mexico, 1969; and "Calibán" [Caliban] *Casa de las Américas* 68 (September-October 1971), and separately in several editions.

5. See, especially, Roberto Fernández Retamar "Para una teoría de la literatura hispanoamericana" [Notes Toward a Theory of Spanish-American Literature], in "Para una teoría de la literatura hispanoamericana" y otras aproximaciones [For a theory of Spanish-American Literature" and Other Essays] (Havana, 1975); and see David Maldivsky, *Teoría literaria general* [General Literary Theory] (Buenos Aires, 1974).

6. José Miguel Ibáñez, *La creación poética* [Poetic Creation] (Santiago, 1969), 11.

7. *Ibid.*, 13-14.

8. Rudolf Grossmann, *Historia y problemas de la literatura latinoamericana* [The History and Problems of Latin-American Literature] (Madrid, 1972), 46; hereafter cited by page number in the text.

9. See, for example, José Carlos Mariátegui, "El proceso de la literatura" [The Process of Literature], in *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* [Seven Interpretive essays on Peruvian Reality] (Havana, 1963), 213-18.

10. The founders of scientific socialism cautioned energetically against the error of ignoring concrete specificities. A Soviet scholar recently has recalled:

[I]t could be said that Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, and Vladimir Ilyich Lenin spoke out repeatedly against the attempts to disfigure dogmatically certain postulates of scientific socialism regarding the general laws of historical development. For example, when criticizing the distinguished ideologue of Russian populism N. Mikailovsky for his false interpretation of *Capital*, Karl Marx wrote in a letter to the editor of the Russian journal *Otechestvennyye Zapiski* [Fatherland notes]: "He [Mikailovsky] feels he absolutely must metamorphose my historical sketch of the genesis of capitalism in Western Europe into a historico-philosophic theory of the general path every people is fated to tread, whatever the historical circumstances in which it finds itself, in order that it may ultimately arrive at the form of economy which ensures, together with the greatest expansion of the productive powers of social labor, the most complete development of man. But I beg his pardon. (He is both honoring and shaming me too much.)"

[Marx to the Editorial Board of the *Otechestvennyye Zapiski*, November 1877, in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, Lewis S. Feuer (Garden City, N.Y., 1959), 440-41]

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin pointed out later that the peculiarity of the historical situation on the eve of the October Revolution "offered us the opportunity to create the fundamental requisites of civilization in a different way from that of the West-European countries." [V. I. Lenin, "Our Revolution

(Apropos of N. Sukhanov's Notes), in *The Lenin Anthology*, ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York, 1975), 705; Qtd. in Nodari Simoniia, "Proceso histórico del 'despertar de Oriente'" [The historical process of 'the awakening of the Orient'] in the journal *Ciencias Sociales* [Social sciences] 3, no. 9 (1972): 207]

11. Antonio Cándido, "Literatura y subdesarrollo" [Literature and Underdevelopment], in *América Latina en su literatura* [Latin America in its Literature], ed. César Fernández Moreno (Mexico City, 1972), 340-342, 347. I do not think, however, that Cándido is entirely correct in stating that "our literatures (like those of North America) are, basically, branches of metropolitan literatures" (344), unless he clarifies that always equivocal arboreal metaphor "branch." It is evident that we are closely linked to those literatures, with their great creative moments: those moments are our tradition as well. But if Cándido's statement was true for centuries, it can no longer be held that present-day North American literature is a 'branch' of present-day English literature or that present-day Spanish-American literature is a "branch" of present-day Spanish literature. I understand the acute Cándido's words as a polemical challenge to intransigent secessionists.

12. *Ibid.*, 347.

13. See Desiderio Navarro, ed., *Cultura, ideología y sociedad: Antología de estudios marxistas sobre la cultura* [Culture, Ideology, and Society: An Anthology of Marxist Studies on Culture] (Havana, 1975).

14. More recent concepts of culture from a semiotic point of view can be found in Yuri Lotman, "El problema de una tipología de la cultura" [The Problem of a Typology of Culture], and Ferruccio Rossi-Landi, "Programación social y comunicación" [Social programming and communication], both in *Casa de las Américas* 71 (March-April 1972). A vivid idea of our culture and its relations will be found in Alejo Carpentier, "De lo real maravillosamente americano" [On the (Latin) American Magically Real], in *Tientos y diferencias* [Themes and Variations] (Mexico City, 1964): this piece appears under the title "De lo real maravilloso americano" [On (Latin) American Magic Realism] in later editions (Havana, 1974, for example).

15. See Alejandro Lipschütz, *Perfil de Indoeuropa de nuestro tiempo. Antología, 1937-1962* [A Profile of Indo-America in Our Time. An Anthology, 1937-1962] (Havana, 1972), 92. In that capital book, Lipschütz combats the "disdain for non-European cultural facts which is the firm basis of Europe's cultural politics in Asia, Africa, Australia, and even Latin America" (93). For Lipschütz's idea of culture, see 40.

16. Miklos Szabolcsi, "L'enseignement de la littérature en Hongrie" [The Teaching of Literature in Hungary], in the collective work, *L'enseignement de la littérature* (Paris, 1971), 612-13.

17. In our case powerful *transculturations* which have been studied by, among others, Fernando Ortiz (with regard to our African heritage) and Lipschütz (on native Americans).

18. Roberto Fernández Retamar, "Martí en su (tercer) mundo" [Martí in his (Third) World], *Cuba socialista* 41 (January 1965): 55. This essay has been republished several times; see also the companion piece, "Notas sobre Martí, Lenin y la revolución anticolonial" [Notes on Martí, Lenin, and the Anticolonial Revolution], *Casa de las Américas* 59 (March-April 1970), where I sketch a parallel between our countries and the European periphery.

19. See Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, Preparatory Notes for *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, in vol. 22 of *Collected Works* (Moscow, 1964), 185-87.

20. We would need a historical study of *stadial regions* of the kind posed by the Soviet historian Alexander Chistozvonov in "Estudio de las revoluciones burguesas europeas de los siglos XVI-XVII por estadios y regiones" [The Study of European Bourgeois Revolutions of the Sixteen and Seventeenth Centuries by Stadia and Regions], *Ciencias Sociales* 4, no. 14 (1973). In it he studies "the stadial-regional form of capitalist development in Central and Eastern Europe," in whose revolutions "there also arose tasks of national liberation and apolitical tasks," and he further contends that "more complex, mediated (and, for the present, little-known) connections are typical of the Iberian cycle" of nineteenth-century revolutions and the revolutionary wars of liberation in the countries of

Latin America. We believe it possible to relate the latter to the stadial type during the period of manufactures" (112-13).

21. See Alejandro Lipschutz, *Marx y Lenin en la América Latina y los problemas indígenas* [Marx and Lenin in Latin America and the Problems of Indigenous Peoples] (Havana, 1974), especially "Lenin y nuestros problemas latinoamericanos" [Lenin and our Latin American Problems]. In the early nineteenth century Alexander von Humboldt had already pointed out in passing that the "the political and moral state" of "the Russian empire" had "many notable points in common" with New Spain (*Ensayo político sobre el reino de la Nueva España* [A Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain]).

22. Ulrich Weisstein, *Comparative Literature and Literary Theory* (Bloomington, Ind. 1973), 29. Broader criteria can be found in I. Soter et al., *La littérature comparée en Europe orientale: Conférence de Budapest, 26-29 octobre 1962* [Comparative Literature in Eastern Europe: A Conference Held in Budapest, 26-29 October 1962] (Budapest, 1963); and Claude Pichois and André M. Roussau, *La littérature comparée* [Comparative Literature], trans. by G. Colón, (Madrid, 1969).

23. Roberto Schwartz has done a good study of the *functions of influences*; see "Dependencia nacional: Desplazamiento de ideologías—Sobre la cultura brasileña en el siglo XIX" [National Dependency: The Displacement of Ideologies—On Brazilian National Culture in the Nineteenth Century], *Casa de las Américas* 81 (November-December 1973).

24. Vera Kuteishchikova, *La novela mexicana: La formación, la originalidad, la etapa contemporánea* [The Mexican novel: The Formation, the Originality, the Contemporary Period] (in Russian) (Moscow, 1971); and in "Valoración múltiple de la novela de la revolución mexicana" [A Many-Sided Evaluation of the Novel of the Mexican Revolution], forthcoming in *Casa de las Américas*.

25. Adrián Marino: "Sobre la crítica de Martí" [On Martí's criticism], *Cahiers Roumains d'études littéraires*, no. 1 (1974): 143.

26. Alfonso Reyes: *El declive. Prolegómenos a una teoría literaria* [The Line of Demarcation: Prolegomena to a Literary Theory] (Mexico City, 1944); all quotations are from this edition; hereafter cited as *D*. A new edition has been published in vol. 15 of Reyes's *Obras completas* [Complete Works] (Mexico City, 1963), painstakingly presented by Ernesto Mejía Sánchez, to which was appended Reyes's "Apuntes para la teoría literaria" [Notes for Literary Theory]. As Mejía Sánchez states, Reyes's "literary thought" is also to be found in, at very least, vol. 14 of his *Obras completas* [Complete works] (Mexico City, 1962), and in *Al yunque, 1944-1958* [At the Forge 1944-1958], (Mexico City, 1960).

27. Reyes was a precursor in more ways than one. For example, certain distinctions that at the time seemed excessively technical may now be compared with those proposed by Galvano Della Volpe in his *Crítica del gusto* [Critique of Taste], 2d ed. (Milan, 1964): for instance, what Reyes called "colloquium" and "paralogism" (*D*, 194) and what Della Volpe calls "univocal," "equivocal," "polymeaning or polysense," (*Crítica*, 121-22).

28. See an allusion to this point in Mejía Sánchez's prologue to the edition of *El declive* in the *Obras completas*, 15: 9. José Antonio Portuondo's review of the first edition of the book had already observed: "[I]t would be proper to point out that this kind of phenomenological analysis bears no similarity to the procedures followed by the partisans of stylistics" ("Alfonso Reyes y la teoría literaria" [Alfonso Reyes and Literary Theory], in *Concepto de la poesía* [The Concept of Poetry], 2d ed. [Havana, 1972], 173).

29. Roman Jakobson, "Fragments de la nouvelle poésie russe" [Fragments of The New Russian Poetry], in *Questions de poétique* [Questions of Poetics], trans. Tzvetan Todorov (Paris, 1973), 15, hereafter cited as *QP*.

30. See B. Eikhenbaum, "La théorie de la 'méthode formelle,'" in *Théorie de la littérature . . . des formalistes russes* (Paris, 1965), 37. See also, in English, Eikhenbaum, "The Theory of the 'Formal Method,'" in *Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays*, trans. and ed. Lee T. Lemon and Marton J. Reis (Lincoln, Neb., 1965), 99-139.

31. Regarding this refusal, this defect, Krystina Pomorska writes: "But the *Opojaz* members never introduced the problem of evaluation into their system; to put it more categorically, they did not think that scholarly procedure should be an evaluative one at all. Indeed, they seem to accept silently the principle enounced by Croce: that our evaluation of art is always and necessarily intuitive," (*Readings in Russian Poetics: Formalism and Structuralist Views*, ed. Ladislav Matejka and Krystina Pomorska [Cambridge, Mass., 1972], 275).

32. Jurij Tynjanov, "Il fatto letterario" [The Literary Fact], in *Avanguardia e tradizione* trans. Sergio Leone (Bari, 1968), 26; hereafter cited by page number in the text.

33. Jurij Tynjanov, "On Literary Evolution," in *Readings in Russian Poetics*, 69.

34. As André Gisselbrecht has pointed out. See "Marxisme et théorie de la littérature," in *Littérature et idéologies*, special issue of *La Nouvelle Critique* no. 39 (1970): 33.

35. See Roberto Fernández Retamar, "A propósito del Círculo de Praga y del estudio de nuestra literatura" [A Propos of the Prague Circle and the Study of Our Literature], in "Para una teoría de la literatura hispanoamericana" y otras aproximaciones, (see n. 5 above), 29-44.

36. José Antonio Portuondo, "El rasgo predominante en la novela hispanoamericana" [The Distinguishing Feature of the Spanish-American Novel] (1951), in *El heroísmo intelectual* [Intellectual Heroism] (Mexico City, 1955), 106; emphasis mine.

37. José Antonio Portuondo, "Literatura y sociedad" [Literature and Society] (1969), *América Latina en su literatura* (see n. 11 above), 391; emphasis mine.

38. One of the finest students of these "novels," Adalbert Dessau, confesses that "such works [by Azuela, Guzmán, Vasconcelos, even Romero] are more like memoirs than real novels" (*La novela de la Revolución Mexicana* [The Novel of the Mexican Revolution] [Mexico City, 1972], 18).

39. H. R. Hays, "La poesía latinoamericana" [Latin-American Poetry], *Gaceta del Caribe* 1, no. 3 (May 1944): 16.

40. Pedro Henríquez Ureña, *Literary Currents in Hispanic America* (Cambridge, Mass., 1946), 147.

41. José Martí, "Julian del Casal" in *Ensayos sobre arte y literatura* [Essays on Art and Literature], ed. Roberto Fernández Retamar (Havana, 1972), 234. In this brief text, Martí traces what would be the parábola of "modernism" (a term he does not use): "This literary generation, so like a [Latin] American family, began with decorative imitation and has gone on to free, concise elegance, and to the sincere, brief, finely wrought artistic expression of personal feeling and direct, truly native understanding."

42. Tomás Navarro [Tomás] *Métrica española: Reseña histórica y descriptiva* [Spanish Prosody: A Historical and Descriptive Survey] (New York, 1956), 250-51. See also the worthwhile "Panorama histórico del género [the *décima*] en España e Hispanoamérica" [A Historical Overview of the Genre (the *décima*) in Spain and Spanish America], in the notable study by Ivette Jiménez de Báez, *La décima popular en Puerto Rico*, [The Popular *décima* in Puerto Rico] (Xalapa, Veracruz [Mexico], 1964). Unfortunately, the author was unaware of Samuel Feijóo's research on the popular Cuban *décima*, see, for example, *Los trovadores del pueblo* [The People's Troubadours] (Santa Clara [Cuba], 1960), 1.

43. Carlos H. Magis, *La lírica popular contemporánea: España, México, Argentina* [Contemporary Popular Lyric Poetry: Spain, Mexico, Argentina] (Mexico City, 1969), 526. Nevertheless, Carolina Poncet (*El romance en Cuba* [The Spanish Medieval Ballad Form in Cuba] [1914; Havana, 1972]), takes the view that in the eighteenth century, Spanish popular poetry also made use of the *décima*, (20-21), and she cites in support of her argument a curious and incontrovertible passage from the French traveler J. P. Bourgoing (21 n. 20).

44. See Sócrates Nolasco, *Una provincia folklórica: Cuba, Puerto Rico, y Santo Domingo* [A Province of Folklore: Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Santo Domingo] (Santiago de Cuba, 1952), 24.

45. Poncet, *El romance en Cuba*, 13, 15, 20, 26, and see 21 n. 20.

46. In *El "Martín Fierro"* [On "Martín Fierro"] (Buenos Aires, 1953), Jorge Luis Borges cites Unamuno's view of "Martín Fierro's monotonous décimas": "Borges comments: 'It may not be fruitless to point out that the 'monotonous décimas' . . . are actually *sextinas*'" (71-72). It is well known that *sextinas* belong to *arte mayor* [i.e., lines of verse longer than eight syllables. — Trans. note], so Borges is equally in error. The stanza in question is a *sextilla* (see Eleuterio F. Tiscornia, *La lengua de "Martín Fierro"* [The Language of "Martín Fierro"] [Buenos Aires, 1930], 284), but of a kind so "original" ("there is no precedent for them in gaucho poetry"), that it is nothing other than a *décima* (a common enough stanza in gaucho poetry) with the first four lines removed, which leaves as the always clever (and erroneous) Borges.

47. Waldo Frank, "Notes on Alfonso Reyes," in Waldo Frank et al., *Páginas sobre Alfonso Reyes* [Pages on Alfonso Reyes] (Monterrey, 1955), I: 415.

48. Of course our countries had novels back then, and even Arturo Torres Riosco, reworking two previous books, brought out a work with the title *Grandes novelistas de la América hispana* [Great Novelists of Hispanic America] (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1949). But Adalberto Dessau seems right in seeing our novels as "historical consciousness," when, referring to the Spanish-American novel prior to the developments of recent years, he writes:

[T]he representative Latin American novels are rather lacking in the human dimension because, in a barely modified atmosphere of colonialism and feudalism, the authors themselves had not reached the stage in the process of individualization proper to the rise of bourgeois society . . . [M]any nineteenth- and even twentieth-century novels . . . are actually essays in the sense that, given the lack of other forms and the immaturity of the genre, something that could better have been published as a pamphlet or an essay was given a novelistic form. . . . [T]he novela latinoamericana como conciencia histórica" ("The Latin-American Novel as Historical Consciousness") in *Actas del Tercer Congreso Internacional de Hispanistas* (Proceedings of the Third International Congress of Hispanists) (Mexico City, 1970), 259.]

49. See Carpentier, *Tientos y diferencias* (see n. 14 above), especially "Problemática de la actual novela latinoamericana" [Problematics of the Present-Day Latin-American Novel].

50. Hays, "La poesía latinoamericana," 16 n. 36.

51. Schnelle, "Acerca del problema de la novela latinoamericana" (see n. 1 above), 165-66 n. 1.

52. Dessau, *La novela de la Revolución Mexicana*, 266 n. 45.

53. See Lucien Goldmann, "Nouveau roman et réalité" [The Nouveau Roman and Reality], in *Pour une sociologie du roman* [Toward a Sociology of the Novel] (Paris, 1964).

54. Rita Schöber, "Périodisation et historiographie littéraire" [Periodization and Literary Historiography], in Schöber et al., *Problèmes de périodisation dans l'histoire littéraire: Colloque international organisé par la section d'études romanes de l'Université Charles de Prague, 29 novembre-1 décembre 1966* [Problems of Periodization in Literary History: International Colloquium Organized by the Section of Romance Studies of the Charles University of Prague, 29 November-1 December 1966], (Prague, 1968), 23.

55. Anatoli Lunacharski, "Tesis sobre las tareas de la crítica marxista," in *Gaceta de Cuba* 112 (May-June 1973): 27. See also, in English, Lunacharski, "Theses on the Problems of Marxist Criticism," in *On Literature and Art*, 2d rev. ed. (Moscow, 1973), 9-21.

56. Carlos Rincón, "Sobre crítica y historia de la literatura hoy en Hispanoamérica" [On Present-Day Literary Criticism and History in Spanish America], *Casa de las Américas* (September-October, 1973), 9-21.

57. For example, Raimundo Lida's essay, "Períodos y generaciones en historia literaria" [Periods and Generations in Literary History] (in *Letras hispánicas* [Hispanic Letters], [Mexico City, 1958]) comments on the symposium on periodization—limited to European literatures—held in Amsterdam in 1935. José Luis Martínez touches on these and other problems in a more "general" way in

"Problemas de historia literaria" [Problems of Literary History] (in *Problemas literarios* [Literary Problems] [Mexico City, 1955]).

58. José Antonio Portuondo, "'Períodos' y 'generaciones' en la historiografía literaria hispanoamericana" ['Periods' and 'Generations' in Spanish American Literary Historiography], in *La historia y las generaciones* [History and Generations] (Santiago de Cuba, 1958); hereafter cited by page number in the text.

59. See José Carlos Mariátegui, *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (see n. 9 above), 219 n. 5.

60. José Antonio Portuondo, "'Esquema de las generaciones literarias cubanas'" [An Overview of Cuban Literary Generations], in *La historia y las generaciones*, 104.

61. See José Antonio Portuondo, "'Realidad y falacia de las generaciones'" [The Reality and the Fallacy of Generations], in *La historia y las generaciones*.

62. Jan O. Fischer, "Opening Remarks," in *Problèmes de périodisation dans l'histoire littéraire* (see n. 54 above), 5. There is a serious attempt to grapple with this problem in the discriminating book by José Juan Arrom, *Examen generacional de las letras hispanoamericanas: Ensayo de método* [A Generational Approach to Spanish-American Letters: An Essay on Method], 2d ed. (Bogotá, 1977).

63. Oldřich Bělič, "'La Périodisation et ses problèmes'" [Periodization and its Problems], in *Problèmes de périodisation dans l'histoire littéraire*; hereafter cited by page number in the text. Bělič's piece was published in Spanish in the Chilean journal *Problemas de literatura* [Literary Problems] 1, no. 2 (September 1972).

64. Zlata Polapova, "Algunos principios generales sobre la periodización en la *Historia de la literatura mundial* (sobre todo en los volúmenes consagrados a los siglos XIX y XX)" [Some General principles of periodization in the *History of World Literature* (with particular reference to the volumes on the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries)], in *Problèmes de périodisation dans l'histoire littéraire*; hereafter cited by page number in the text.

On the present status of what is projected to be a ten volume history, see A. Ushakov, "El Instituto Máximo Gorki de Literatura Mundial" [The Maxim Gorky World Literature Institute], *Ciencias Sociales* [Social sciences] 4, no. 6 (1971): 224.

65. I have expressed my opinion on this point in "Modernismo, noventiocho, subdesarrollo" [Modernism, the Generation of 1898, Underdevelopment], in "Para una teoría de la literatura hispanoamericana" y otras aproximaciones (see n. 5 above), 97-106. A critical précis of arguments through 1968 can be found in Antonio Melis, "Bilancio degli studi sul modernismo ispanoamericano" [The Present State of Studies on Spanish-American Modernism], in *Lavori della Sezione Florentina del Gruppo Ispanistico C.N.R.* [Proceedings of the Florentine Section of the Hispanic Studies Group of the National Research Center], Ser. 2 (Florence, 1969).

66. Leonardo Acosta, "'El barroco americano' y la ideología colonialista" [The 'American Baroque' and Colonialist Ideology] in *Unión* [Union] (September 1972): 59.

67. Federico Alvarez, "¿Romanticismo en Hispanoamérica?" [Romanticism in Spanish America?], in *Actas del Tercer Congreso Internacional de Hispanistas* (see n. 48 above), 75, 75-76.

68. Miria Aguirre, *El romanticismo de Rousseau a Victor Hugo* [Romanticism from Rousseau to Victor Hugo] (Havana, 1973), 413; hereafter cited by page number in the text.

69. See Noël Salomon, "José Martí et la prise de conscience latinoaméricaine" [José Martí and Latin America's coming to consciousness], in *Cuba 51* [Cuba 51], nos. 35-36, (4th trimester 1970-1st trimester 1971): 5-6. This important work was republished in *Anuario Martiano* [Martí Annals] 4 (Havana, 1972).

70. That need is not excluded for the simple reason that we are dealing here with something elaborated from the perspective of a class, which, as France Vernier has rightly observed, decides in each instance what literature is: not "the ensemble of literary texts" but rather "the ensemble of 'sacred' writings which, in any given period, are recognized as 'literary' by a social class"; "the dominant

class" which "tends to impose its corpus upon the dominated classes" (*Une science du littéraire est-elle possible?* [Is a Literary Science Possible?] [Paris, 1972], 4-5. The development of metropolitan bourgeoisies explains the internal coherence of the respective literary corpuses; the meager development of our dependent bourgeoisies, the chaos of our literary corpuses. In Latin America we shall never achieve that form of literary organization from a bourgeois perspective.

71. Pedro Henríquez Ureña, "Camino de nuestra historia literaria" [Paths of our Literary History] in *Seis ensayos en busca de nuestra expresión* [Six Essays in Search of Our Own Forms of Expression], also in *Obra crítica* [Critical Works] (Mexico City, 1960), 255.

72. Camila Henríquez Ureña, (who was an adviser to the project from the outset) has given us an excellent overview of this *Colección* in "Sobre la *Colección Literatura Latinoamericana*." [On the *Colección Literatura Latinoamericana*], *Casa de las Américas* 45 (November-December 1967); for a comparison with the *Biblioteca Americana* (in the planning of which Camila Henríquez Ureña, also participated), see 160.

73. On this matter, see, for example, Jaime Mejía Duque, "El 'boom' de la narrativa latinoamericana" [The 'Boom' of Latin-American Narrative] in *Narrativa y neocolonialismo en América Latina* [Narrative and Neocolonialism in Latin America], (Bogotá, 1972); and Mario Benedetti, *El escritor latinoamericano y la revolución posible* [The Latin-American Writer and the Possible Revolution] (Buenos Aires, 1974), especially 157-155.

74. Alfonso Reyes, "Fragmento sobre la interpretación social de las letras iberoamericanas" [A Fragment on the Social Interpretation of Ibero-American Letters], in *Marginalia, primera serie* [Marginalia, first series] (Mexico, 1952), 154.

75. Jaime Labastida, "Alejo Carpentier: Realidad y conocimiento estético . . ." [Alejo Carpentier: Reality and Aesthetic Knowledge . . .], in *Casa de las Américas* 87 (November-December, 1974): 24.

76. A correct way toward accomplishing that task can be found in the works of two young Cuban critics, Sergio Chaple (*Rafael María de Mendive: Definición de un poeta* [Rafael María de Mendive: Definition of a Poet] [Havana, 1973]), and Salvador Arias (*Búsqueda y análisis* [Search and Analysis] [Havana, 1974]).

77. An example of the integral criticism our literature needs is Antonio Cornejo Polar's book *Los universos narrativos de José María Arguedas* [The Narrative Universes of José María Arguedas] (Buenos Aires, 1973).

78. Jean Pérus, *Métodes et techniques de travail en histoire littéraire* [Methods and Techniques in Literary History] (Paris, 1972), 60.

79. Vermier, *Une science du littéraire est-elle possible?*, I, n. 67 [editorial note in *La Nouvelle Critique*, which published the essay].

80. See, for example, André Gisselbrecht, "Marxisme et théorie de la littérature" (see n. 34 above).

Prologue to Ernesto Cardenal

1. *Nueva poesía nicaragüense* [New Nicaraguan Poetry], introduction by Ernesto Cardenal, comp. and ed. Orlando Cuadra Downing (Madrid, 1949).

2. See Roberto Fernández Retamar, "Situación actual de la poesía hispanoamericana" [The present state of Spanish-American Poetry], *Revista Hispánica Moderna* 24, no. 4 (October 1958); *Para el perfil definitivo del hombre* [Toward a Definitive Profile of Man] (Havana, 1981).

3. The best of Cardenal's collections would seem to be *Poemas reunidos, 1949-1969* [Collected Poems/1949-1969], ed. Aníbal Cabal (Valencia, [Venezuela], 1972). At the beginning of this book we find these words from Cardenal: "I have copied a great number of poems, I have corrected many of them, I have finished poems that had been in rough draft for years, I have disinterred a good deal of unpublished material." More up-to-date is *Poesía* [Poetry], ed. Cintio Vitier (Havana, 1979); unless expressly indicated, my citations of Cardenal are from this edition.

4. Ernesto Cardenal, "Ansias y lengua de la poesía nicaragüense" [Longings and Language in Nicaraguan Poetry], introduction to *Nueva poesía nicaragüense*, 67.

5. [Ernesto Mejía Sánchez], colophon to "Zero Hour" and other *Documentary Poems*, by Ernesto Cardenal, ed. Donald D. Walsh, trans. Paul W. Borgeson and Jonathan Cohen (1960; New York, 1980).

6. Merton states in its prologue that those poems are "a series of utterly simple poetic sketches with all the purity and sophistication that we find in the Chinese masters of the T'ang Dynasty." And he adds, "Never has the experience of novitiate life in a Cistercian monastery been rendered with such fidelity, and yet with such reserve." Ernesto Cardenal, "in *The Literary Essays of Thomas Merton*, ed. Patrick Hart (New York, 1981), 323.

7. This is José Coronel Urecho's expression for Rubén Darío in the former's "Oda a Rubén Darío" [Ode to Rubén Darío] (1925), in *Nueva poesía nicaragüense*, 249. Mejía Sánchez also uses it in his introduction.

8. Introduction to *Epigramas* [Epigrams], by Ernesto Cardenal (Mexico City, 1961).

9. Ernesto Cardenal, "La experiencia más importante" [The Most Important Experience], *Casa de las Américas* 70 (January-February, 1972): 182. Other interviews that are of interest on this subject can be found in the Cardenal miscellany *La sanidad de la revolución* [The Sanctity of the Revolution] (Salamanca, 1976).

10. Ernesto Cardenal, *In Cuba*, trans. Donald D. Walsh 1972; New York, 1974), 7.

11. Ernesto Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname*, trans. Donald D. Walsh (1975; Maryknoll, N.Y., 1982).

12. Friedrich Engels, "On the History of Early Christianity," in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *On Religion* (New York, 1969), 316. See also Engels's introduction to Marx's "The Class Struggles in France, 1848 to 1850," in *Marx and Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, ed. Lewis S. Feuer (Garden City, N.Y., 1959), 281-317.

13. Ernesto Cardenal, "Lo que fue Solentiname (Carta al pueblo de Nicaragua)," *Casa de las Américas* num. 108 (May-June, 1978) [The Meaning of Solentiname. (A letter to the People of Nicaragua)], it has also appeared in *Nicaragua in Revolution: The Poets Speak/ Nicaragua en Revolución: Los poetas hablan—A Bilingual Collage*, ed. B. A. Aldaraca et al. (Minneapolis, 1980), 246-252.

14. See Ernesto Cardenal, "Luces" [Lights], *Casa de las Américas* 117 (November-December 1979); see also *Nicaragua in Revolution*, 284-87.

15. See Roberto Fernández Retamar, "Antipoesía y poesía conversacional en Hispanoamérica" [Antipoetry and Conversational Poetry in Spanish America] (1968) in Retamar et al., *Panorama de la actual literatura latinoamericana* [Panorama of Present-Day Latin American Literature] (Havana, 1969). See also, in Retamar, *Para el perfil* (see n. 2 above): "[T]he poetry of the person who, as I have stated several times, I consider the finest of the Spanish-American poets who follow the great figures of the avant-garde: Ernesto Cardenal" (203).

16. Juan Ramón Jiménez, "José Martí (1895)," in *Españoles de tres mundos* [Spaniards from Three Worlds], (Buenos Aires 1942), 33.

17. José Emilio Pacheco, "Nota sobre la otra vanguardia" [A Note on the Other Avant-Garde], *Casa de las Américas* 118 (January-February 1980).

18. Ernesto Cardenal, qtd. in Mario Benedetti, "Ernesto Cardenal: Evangelio y revolución" [Ernesto Cardenal: Gospel and Revolution], *Casa de las Américas* 63 (November-December 1970): 175-76; rpt. in *Los poetas comunicantes* [Communicating Poets] (Montevideo, 1972), 101.

19. André Gisselbrecht, "Marxisme et théorie de la littérature" [Marxism and Literary Theory], special issue of *La Nouvelle Critique* 39 (1970): 31.

20. "The compiler of this anthology is among those who believe that literature alone, literature for literature's sake, is useless. Literature must be of service. This is why literature must be political.

However, not political *propaganda*, rather, political *poetry*." (Ernesto Cardenal, Introduction to *Poesía Nicaragüense*, vii).

21. *Ibid.*, viii, and see 67.

22. Among many other writings by S. M. Eisenstein on the subject, see "The Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram" [1929], in his *Film Form: Essay in Film Theory*, ed. and trans. Jay Leyda (New York, 1949).

23. Ariel Dorfman, "Tiempo de amor, tiempo de lucha: La unidad de los *Epigramas* de Cardenal" [A Time for Love, a Time for Struggle: The Unity of Cardenal's *Epigrams*], *Texto Crítico: Revista del Centro de Investigaciones Lingüístico-Literarias de la Universidad Veracruzana* 13, (April-June 1979): 14-15.

24. See Ernesto Cardenal, *Psalmos* (1964; New York, 1981).

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