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INTER-AMERICAN MODERN AND MODERNIST POETRY: THE POETICS OF REIMAGINING THE AMERICAS

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by

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ABSTRACT

Through a re-vision of modern and modernist nineteenth-century inter-American poetic discourse, this dissertation explores ways in which prominent poets contributed to the articulation of an "American expression," as understood by the Cuban poet, critic, and cultural theorist José Lezama Lima, that is, as a vernacular hemispheric literary expression that concentrates on America and re-cognizes it as a critical summa of experiences, imaginations, and knowledges. Analyzing prose and poetic works, I examine how the selected poets not only reimagined the Americas from epistemological, aesthetic, and ethic perspectives, but also engaged, interrogated, and confronted the logos and ethos enforced by the European and the emerging US-American hegemonic project of modernity. In so doing, I trace expressions of decolonizing thinking in the poetic origins created by Andrés Bello, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Esteban Echeverría, Matthew James Chapman, and José María Heredia in their pastoral texts, as well as in the interplay of freedom, democracy, and poesis manifested in works by Emily Dickinson, Rubén Darío, Walt Whitman, and José Martí. Thus, on the one hand, I show that the first group of poets produced and passed on critical principles regarding poesis and freedom that were essential for their successors to continue and further the process of democratization and poetic modernization in the Americas. On the other hand, I argue that Dickinson, Darío, Whitman, and Martí created what I call Lezamian images, or oblique poetic images that poetically historicized critical knowledges, experiences, and imaginations that were elided by modernity's civilizing criteria, as well as instantiations of the nonexistent that gave gravity to directional causalities related to democracy and poetic creation that

deflected modernity's linear directionality. These slant poetic images constitute fragments of a symbolic inter-American poetic counter-archive whose critical knowledges and imaginations remain useful to re-examine, reimagine, and articulate a possible future for twenty-first century modernities.

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To make a prairie it takes a clover and one bee,
One clover, and a bee,
And revery.
The revery alone will do,
If bees are few.

Emily Dickinson (Fr1779)

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation explores how nineteenth-century modern and modernist inter-American poetic discourse not only problematized and contested modernity's logos and ethos, but also began their resignification in the context of the cultural, economic, political, and geopolitical restructurings that unfolded during the process of political and cultural emancipation, nation-building, and the formation of national literatures. By re-visioning[1] prose and poetic works by prominent American[2] poets, I analyze expressions of decolonizing thinking that reimagined the Americas and produced directional causalities that reoriented the directionality enforced by the European and the nascent US-American hegemonic project of modernity. While in the first chapter I explore, through the lens of the pastoral, how the doors of the future were unlocked by Andrés Bello, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Esteban Echeverría, Matthew James Chapman, and José María Heredia during the first half of the nineteenth century, in the second and third chapters I examine how Emily Dickinson, Rubén Darío, Walt Whitman, and José Martí unhinged those doors from their jambs from the 1850s onwards by focusing on the interplay of freedom, democracy, and poesis. All these poets are considered as foundational and canonical figures in the literatures of the Americas. My study of their

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[1] As proposed by the U.S. poet Adrienne Rich in her influential essay "When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-vision" (1971), that is, re-vision as "the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction" (35).

[2] Although the United States of America has identified and represented itself as America for centuries, I use the words 'America,' 'American,' and 'hemispheric' in their actual sense, that is, as words that refer and correspond to a geopolitical notion of the continent that entails North America, Central America, the Caribbean, and South America as its major independent, yet interrelated constituting regions.

works aims to re-vision their individual and collective significance in the articulation of a modern literary "American expression" as understood by the Cuban poet, critic, and cultural theorist José Lezama Lima (1910-1976),[3] as well as to delve into their cultural imaginations and reimaginings of the Americas from aesthetic, epistemological, and ethical perspectives. In so doing, I intend to contribute to further current critical understandings of these poets' works by not only bringing them to light from different perspectives and opening up innovative critical venues to grasp and re-examine them, but also by unsettling and challenging canonical interpretations of them. Bello, Emerson, Echeverría, Heredia, Dickinson, Whitman, Martí, and Darío were "children of the fire, made of it," as Emerson claimed as origin and generative force driving the American poets (*CW* 3: 4[4]). Yet, as we shall see in the second and third chapters, Dickinson's, Martí's, Darío's, and Whitman's incendiary voices revived the fire of freedom and poesis that ignited in their predecessors and made it variously blaze in their poesis and poetics, becoming, I dare to say, the most prominent forerunners of twentieth-century modernisms.

Given the various perspectives about modernism and approaches to its study, a working understanding of the term in the context of this dissertation seems germane. I consider modernism in the Americas as a cultural expression that emanated from the

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[3] That is to say, as a vernacular continental literary and poetic expression Lezama Lima saw in authors such as José Martí, Walt Whitman, and Herman Melville, the foregrounding of American reality as the main referent to be recognized and represented, an insight that suggests a contrapuntal inter-American approach that understands "American expression" as a critical summa of experiences, imaginations, and knowledges.

[4] All citations of Emerson's works are taken from *The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (2005) vols. 1-12.

process of critical engagement with modernity that began to develop in the sixteenth century. As such, modernism brings forth a critical summa of local and global cultural exchanges that becomes manifested in manifold configurations, addressing common and different concerns and producing distinctive aesthetics and poetics, notably from 1850s onwards. Works by Dickinson, Martí, Whitman, and Darío offer compelling instances of the unfolding of this process of critical thinking and poetic modernization that surged in the first half of the century and that subsequently turns radical. Hence, by using the word 'radical' I intend to invoke the transformative and political import of the word, yet also its etymological meaning. As José Martí reminds us by (re)signifying it in his essay "A la raíz" (1893) ["To the Root"]: "[a] la raíz va el hombre verdadero. Radical no es más que eso: el que va a las raíces. No se llame radical quien no vea las cosas en su fondo. Ni hombre que no ayude a la seguridad y dicha de otros hombres" (*OC* 2: 670;[5] "[a] real man goes to the roots. A radical is that and nothing more: he who goes to the roots. Anyone failing to see things in their core and substance is never called a radical. Nor is anyone who fails to further the happiness and security of others called a man"; Elinor Randall et al. 356[6]). These poets, whether male or female, were radical not only because they went back to origins enacted by their precursors, re-visioned their unfulfilled promises, and reimagined the Americas, but also because they institutionalized, figuratively, the coming-of-age of a poetic tradition of radicalism and dissent that

[5] Unless otherwise stated, all citations of Martí's works are taken from *José Martí Obras Completas* (1946) vols. 1-2.
[6] All non-English citations in this dissertation are accompanied by published translations where they were available. Where not otherwise noted, the translations are mine.

continues until today, and whose origins can be traced as far back as the seventeenth century.

According to Aníbal Quijano, the ongoing globalization is the culmination of a process that began with the constitution of America and Eurocentric modern/colonial capitalism and that established a global "patrón de poder" in which America, as a hemispheric multinational phenomenon, became the first "espacio/tiempo" of this paradigm, and "la primera *identidad* de la modernidad" (778; "power paradigm"; "space/time"; "the first *identity* of modernity"). In his view, one of the fundamental articulating axes of this "power paradigm," whose fundamental characteristic is the coloniality, is the idea of race imposed with colonialism, or the ideological construct that hierarchized and naturalized phenotypic differences as biological inequalities "en una escala que va de la bestia al europeo" (611, 759; "on a scale that goes from the beast to the European"). The crystallization of the idea of race as a category, on the one hand, enabled the racialization of cultural, economic, and political power relations that legitimated the Eurocentric character of the modern world-system and, on the other hand, legitimized the naturalization of European domination in the Americas through the control of social and cultural relations, and the production of knowledge. Thus, "la colonialidad del poder" refers to the relations of domination that this "power paradigm" started to produce during colonialism and, which have persisted in manifold ways until the present and prove to be constitutive, rather than derivative, of modernity (777-832; "the coloniality of power").

The so-called discovery of the New World propelled European desire and imagination, bringing about a global restructuring that, as Enrique Dussel points out,

allowed Europe "triunfar en su competencia con el mundo islámico, el Indostán, el sudeste asiático o China" by winning over the Atlantic and later the Indic and Pacific oceans, and to mobilize cultural, economic, and geopolitical power relations that configure what we know as modernity (204; "to triumph in its competition with the Islamic world, Hindustan, Southeast Asia, and China"; Alessandro Fornazzari 223). During the past four decades, and despite speculations about the end of modernity, modernity and its legacies have received increasing scholarly attention, which has impelled a critical inquiry and rethinking of its configurations and implications on a global scale. Whereas Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar contends that "to announce the general end of modernity, even as an epoch, much less as an attitude or ethos seems premature, if not patently ethnocentric, at a time when Non-Western people everywhere begin to engage critically their own hybrid modernities" (14), Dussel argues for considering modernity neither as the outcome of internal or exclusive processes to Europe, nor as starting in the late eighteenth century.[7]

[7] Although Dussel agrees with Immanuel Wallerstein's formulation on how Europe achieved a central status in the modern world-system since the late fifteenth century, he incorporates the non-West in the analysis by focusing more extensively on China, and arguing that Europe's hegemony in the modern world-system was impossible prior to the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century, thus, displacing its centrality to 200 years old rather than 500 years. Unlike Wallerstein, who considers modernity as starting in the eighteenth century, Dussel emphasizes the foundational role of Spain and Portugal in the constitution of the modern world-system and the configuration of modernity, proposing in turn a reconceptualization of modernity that considers the latter as developing in two stages. While the first stage of modernity begins with the emergence of the modern world-system and, consequently, with the process of colonization in the Americas, the second stage, which continues to the present, is associated with the Enlightenment and the industrial revolution started in the eighteenth century (202-218). See more on Dussel's arguments about his spatial and temporal reconceptualization of modernity in *1492 El encubrimiento del Otro. Hacia el origen del "mito de la modernidad"* (1994),

In Dussel's view, which coincides with the theses advanced by C.L.R. James and W. E. B. Dubois in the 1930s as well as with Aníbal Quijano's, Walter Mignolo's, and Ramón Grosfoguel's more recent perspectives, modernity results from the articulation of the first planetary world-system in which Europe achieved centrality, making it indivisible from the "coloniality of power." Modernity, then, is not a European invention, but rather the expression of entanglements and relations that have shaped pre- and post-fifteenth-century modernities through historic, cultural, and economic relations that should also recognize, as Susan Stanford Friedman and other scholars argue, "the earlier modernities of the Tang Dynasty in China, the Abbasid Dynasty of the Muslim empire, and the Mongol Empire, to cite just a few" (433). As these critical precedents indicate, dominant notions of modernity have been and will continue to be contested and unsettled, bringing to the fore the need to reexamine modernity's unfolding from perspectives that acknowledge its pluriversality and dismantle its myths.

The colonization of the American hemisphere thus implied its subsumption into the modern world-system and its subjection to a "power paradigm" that devised global hierarchical notions of race, class, gender, history, religion, epistemology, language, and aesthetics in order to "civilize" the newly-found lands. These hegemonic configurations, however, have been persistently challenged and reimagined by alternative knowledges or "border thinking," as understood by Enrique Dussel and Walter Mignolo. In their view, "border thinking," or "decolonizing thinking," constitutes a critical thought produced in the interstices between the culture enforced by modernity and the cultures it excludes. As

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and "Meditaciones anti-cartesianas: sobre el origen del anti-discurso filosófico de la modernidad" (2008).

Dussel emphasizes, these knowledges do not imply epistemologies that would be "pure," immune, or independent from "the coloniality of power," but rather critical knowledges that emerge at the intersection of self-privileging European and US-American centrality and its "exteriority," or the space where modernity has relegated everything that does not conform to its universalizing criteria of civilization (221).

Literary history of the Americas reveals the existence of a long-standing poetic tradition of decolonizing thinking that has partaken of historical processes of cultural and epistemological contestation and deflection from European and US-American dominant notions of modernity. In this regard, the Mexican poet, critic, and Nobel Laureate Octavio Paz (1914-1998), in his influential study on the Western tradition of modern poetry from romanticism through the avant-gardes *Los hijos del limo* (1974) [*The Children of the Mire*], argued, problematically, that Western modern poetry is "one;"[8] that it begins with modernity in the late eighteenth century and ends with the avant-gardes of the twentieth century, thus, giving birth to the contemporary period (10). Likewise, he claimed that modern poetry is characterized by an oscillation between irony and critique that shows "una reacción frente, hacia y contra la modernidad: la Ilustración, la razón crítica, el liberalismo, el positivismo y el marxismo" (Ibid; "a reaction against

[8] Based on the unifying aspects Paz found among European, Spanish American, and US-American poetry, he understood Western modern poetry as encompassing European and American poetic traditions, though the latter, in his view, emerged during the second half of the nineteenth century (160). Whereas his poetic cartography recognized America as part of the West, bringing to the fore the problematic polysemy of 'the West' as a concept, its genealogy and continuous resignifications from the nineteenth through the twenty-first century, his conventional spatialization or his implied location of modernism in metropolitan cities results in universalizations that continue to perpetuate a European cultural hegemony.

the modern era, tugging first in one direction then another as the manifestations of the modern have changed –the Enlightenment, critical reason, liberalism, positivism, and Marxism"; Rachel Philips vi). In his view, this process of critique manifests a shift in the poetry produced in the second half of the twentieth century that indicates the collapse of modernity's master narratives and a resignification of our system of beliefs. Therefore, if "la destrucción de la eternidad Cristiana" and "la secularización de sus valores y su transposición a otra categoría temporal" had changed our notion of time, opening the doors of the future and transforming modern life into a "marcha sin fin hacia el futuro" since the Renaissance, the future, after the 1950s, started to be perceived as a march toward the apocalypse (194,196; "the destruction of Christian eternity"; "the secularization of its values and its transposition into another category of time"; "an endless march toward the future"; Philips 149,150).

Like the term 'modernity,' 'modernism' has turned into a contested concept whose elusiveness and polysemy make pertinent to ask ourselves, what do we understand by modernism? According to David Macey in *The Penguin Dictionary of Critical Theory* (2000), "the term is widely used to describe a variety of tendencies within the European, and especially Anglo-American, literature of the early twentieth century" (257). Although he admits the indeterminacy of the term, the notion of modernism, the characterizations, and the cartography he provides establish that, despite the fact that "[i]n Spanish-speaking Latin America *modernismo* was applied from the 1890s onwards to a variety of poetic and literary movements," modernism refers to an array of "tendencies" found in European and "especially Anglo-American" literary productions of the early twentieth century (258). Macey's emphasis on European and Anglo-American modernism, or,

rather, U.S. modernism, since there are no references to any other Anglo-American modernism, exposes an alarming shift from Paz's Eurocentrism. In this regard, Susan Stanford Friedman addresses the European and Anglo-American centrism in U.S. modernist studies, arguing that the periodization of modernism provided in the founding statement of the Modernist Studies Association, (which eleven years after her critique remains unaltered in their website), or modernism as starting in the late nineteenth century through the first half of the twentieth century, implies a "spatial politics" that "privileges an Anglo-American modernism, that is, modernism in English produced in Britain and the United States and by expatriates living abroad" (426). Such "temporal boundaries," as she adds, reveal "an Anglo-American and English-language bias and thus do not even work for Western modernism" (427).

As is apparent, conventional notions of modernism that entail "spatial politics" that privilege European and U.S. cultural hegemony by overlooking the fact that modernism has unfolded multifariously, producing various and distinctive expressions, "some of which overlap with each other and others of which have a different time period altogether," have proved to be inadequate to the study of Western modernism (Stanford Friedman 432). Indeed, the dismissal of non-U.S. American modernisms and of "modernism at large," or in Andreas Huyssen's view of "the cross-national cultural forms that emerge from the negotiation of the modern with the indigenous, the colonial, and the postcolonial in the "non-Western world," in the study of modernism, represent a scholarly regression and a "sanctioned ignorance" that indisputably contribute to reproduce universalizing and reductionist understandings and accounts of the world that

do not account for the knowledges of the world, perpetuating power imbalances through cultural homogeneity and exclusion (Huyssen 194; Gayatri Spivak qtd. in Huyssen 198). While I agree with Huyssen's claim for expanding the geographies of modernism as well as with his (re)phrasing "modernism at large," as it provides a middle ground between the "too pluralistic" term "multiple modernism" and the "alternative modernism" with its implicit suggestion of "a hierarchy of a real or original modernism and its alternatives," I find that his notion of "modernism at large" delinks non-Western modernism from Western modernism, overshadowing the relations and entanglements that have configured them both (194). Likewise, by using "alternative modernism" and non-Western modernism, or "modernism at large," interchangeably, and understanding them as "that earlier phase of non-European modernism in Asia, Latin America, or Africa," Huyssen risks confusing his own characterization of "modernism at large" (198). However, he provides an interesting contrast with Paz's spatialization of the 'West' since in Huyssen's view Latin American and African modernisms are non-Western because the 'West' entails Europe and the U.S. of America. Paz's and Huyssen's spatializations and ideas of modernity and modernism stress, yet again, the need for re-examining and reconceptualizing terms such as 'West,' 'non-West,' modernity, and modernism from non-hierarchical and pluriversal logics that interrogate the ideologies, inclusions, and exclusions embedded in them, on the one hand. On the other hand, we must seek an understanding that non-Western modernisms are not the alternatives of European or U.S. modernism, its *others*, but rather manifestations of modernism in their own right, which need to be studied as constitutive rather than as supplementary in the history of modernism as a cultural phenomenon that was experienced worldwide.

The quest for an historic sense, or 'sense' understood as direction, meaning, and sensibility is central in the notion of history as the becoming of a landscape of José Lezama Lima. In his collection of essays *La expresión americana* [*The American Expression*] (1957), he confronts Western epistemologies as manifested in Hegel's and Spengler's teleologies by proposing a poetic logos.[9] From Lezama Lima's view, historicism prescribed a "causalidad de sentido" for America that rendered its landscape or its cultured nature as infantile, ahistorical and inert, imposing a historic sense or directionality that would supposedly lead to progress and self-development (49; "directional causality"). For the poet, historicist perspectives denied and castrated the American landscape, enforcing a logos that granted the possibility of history in the Americas either as a progressive becoming whose inevitable trajectory would culminate in Europe, or as an echo of the old world, as Hegel argued. Hence, he contended "una

[9] Lezama Lima began to participate in the Cuban literary scene during the 1930s by publishing his first book of poetry *Muerte de Narciso* in 1937, and by founding and collaborating in the editorial board of the literary magazines *Verbum* (1937), *Espuela de Plata* (1939-1941), *Clavileño* (1941-1943), *Nadie Parecía* (1942-1944), *Poeta* (1942-1943), and *Orígenes* (1944-1956). While in his essay "Julián del Casal" (1941) we observe that the poet started to outline principles that would characterize his cultural and historiographic project as a critical method oriented toward seeking America's originality in terms of origins rather than of novelty, and for "la huella de la diferenciación" and the "misterio del eco," or the "intocable misterio, invisibles, lluvias y cristales" that interpose themselves between the "voz originaria y el eco," instead of conforming to "un desteñido complejo que se derivaría de meras comprobaciones, influencias o prioridades, convirtiendo miserablemente a los epígonos americanos, en meros testimonios de ajenos nacimientos," it is in *La expresión americana* that his ideas appear consolidated (Lezama Lima, "Julián del Casal" 51; "the trace of the differentiation"; "mistery of the echo"; "untouchable mystery, invisible rains and crystals"; "originary voice and the echo"; "a discolored complex derived from mere verifications, influences, or priorities that would miserably transform the American epigones into mere testimonies of others' births").

técnica de la ficción[10] tendrá que ser imprescindible cuando la técnica histórica no pueda establecer el dominio de sus precisiones. Una obligación casi de volver a vivir lo que ya no se puede precisar" (56; "a fictional technique will be necessary in the face of the inability of the historic technique to establish control over its accuracies. It is almost like an obligation to live again what can no longer be determined").

The inability of historiography and its scientific technique to produce a reliable or accurate account of the past, whether because of the unavoidable mediation of imagination or due to the exclusions of knowledges and experiences, or because of the inability to account for the ways the American landscape evolves in its process of becoming, rather than adopting origins that offer distorted images of America that reduce it to replicas, it becomes necessary, according to Lezama Lima, to make use of a fictional/poetic technique.[11] In effect, Lezama offered a poetic-mythic logos whose

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[10] As critics have noted, Lezama Lima mistakenly attributed the notion of the "fictional technique" to Ernst Robert Curtius, who in turn proposed the poetic method as a "concepto-límite" of historicism by drawing from Arnold Toynbee's idea of "fictional technique" proposed in *A Study of History* (1943, 1939) (Irlemar Chiampi in *La expresión Americana* 55; "borderline-concept").

[11] Although Lezama Lima acknowledged the efforts of Curtius and T.S. Eliot to anticipate different methodological approaches to address the problem of historicism, he considered that Eliot proposed a "critical mythic" method to analyze contemporary works that, instead of searching for new myths, focused on their basis on mythic epochs (57). In his view, Eliot's approach correlated with his pessimistic idea that "la creación fue realizada por los antiguos y que a los contemporáneos sólo nos queda el juego de las combinatorias," or repetition with a difference (Ibid; "creation was made by the ancients and that for the contemporaries only the combinatorial play is available"). In contrast to Eliot, Lezama Lima's critical poetic-mythic method aimed to recreate history through a re-vision of tradition, history, and the mythic past and its origins that is not only to recognize continuities and incorporate what was excluded from the official history, but also to "pellizcar aquellas zonas del pasado donde se habían aposentado víveros de innovaciones," as he argued Joyce, Picasso, and Stravinsky did, in order to bring to life the non-existent (158; "pinch those zones of the past where hatcheries of innovations had lodged").

fictional technique would give the possibility "de volver a vivir lo que ya no se puede precisar" through fragments or "images." His notion of the *imago*, then, refers to a poetic knowledge that is woven by a metaphoric memory and a critical summa of transhistorical, transgeographical, and transcultural experiences and imaginations that bring forth a "visión histórica, que es ese contrapunto o tejido entregado por la *imago,* por la imagen participando en la historia" (49; "historic vision, that is a counterpoint or the weave provided by the *imago,* by the image participating in history"). This "historic vision" crystallizes the moment in which "el sujeto metafórico" intervenes in history to poetically historicize not only what was elided and new myths that result from the re-visionary process that is to reorganize and ascribe new meanings to the mythic past, but also germs of the impossible or of the non-existent (54; "metaphorical subject").

In this regard, in his essay "La dignidad de la poesía" (1956) ["The Dignity of Poetry"], Lezama Lima discusses the character of the *imago* as a "contraréplica," or as an oblique image that disrupts the directionality of the ethos or behavior of creation by giving gravity to the nonexistent in reality (52; "counter-replica"). To illustrate his idea, he recounts how in ancient theogonies, orphic or Persian,

> [e]l espíritu de la visita está íntimamente entrelazado con la ausencia, por la muerte de algún familiar. Ahora bien, el que llega no es el esperado, sino el caballo que con sus cascos toca a la puerta. Ambas cosas son imposibles, pero su simple potencialidad en la imagen basta para crearle su gravitación. … Se espera al muerto, el caballo lo dejará en nuestra puerta, es decir, su imagen oblicua. (52)
>
> [t]he spirit of the visit is closely linked with the absence by the death of some relative. Well now, the one who arrives is not that who is expected, but the horse that with its hooves knocks the door. Both things are impossible, but its simple potentiality in the image is enough to give it gravity. … We expect the dead, the horse will leave him at our door, that is to say, his oblique image.]

In this way, and unlike T.S. Eliot's notion of the "objective correlative," a key phrase used for the first time by the U.S. painter Washington Allston in 1840, or the idea that emotion in art should be expressed through "a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that *particular* emotion," or through a combination of images, objects, events, and descriptions that will evoke the appropriate emotion, Lezama Lima's image neither searches for an objective equivalent nor is it restricted to the expression of emotions (Eliot 100). His oblique poetic image, with its fictional/poetic technique, participates in the process of re-vision and recreation of history by opening a parenthesis with its imagination to poetically introject experiences, cultural imaginations, and epistemologies that have been either suppressed or dismissed, as well as refractions of impossibilities or exceptions that give gravity to what does not exist, thus, reconstituting and illuminating ways in which the American landscape can go toward an alternative sense, meaning, and direction.

Along this line, Saint Lucian poet, playwright, and Nobel laureate Derek Walcott, in his review of *Caribbeana: An Anthology of English Literature of the West Indies 1657-1777* (1996), discusses how the anthologized texts reify a literary history of the West Indies that glorifies a genocidal and exclusionary past from which the Caribbean polyvocality was, once again, irrevocably silenced. Walcott problematizes the literary history that perpetuates a genesis for West Indian Anglophone literature that is mainly articulated by Englishmen, and questions the very possibility of constructing a history in the West Indies. As Lezama Lima is aware that there is a past that cannot be determined accurately, Walcott too knows that what is missing in Thomas W. Krise's selection "will

never be recognized because it is unrecordable. Besides, its language is lost" (Walcott n.pag.). Therefore, he states,

> [w]hat is archival in the Caribbean, as the Caribbean writer knows, is what got lost in the annals of sugar cane burned every harvest like the library of Alexandria, what disappeared in spray in the wake of the slaves. A huge amnesia rather than a history. That is our first book of Genesis. In the end, as it was in the Beginning, it is still the Word, not just the Noun or the Number, that illuminates every race. (n.pag.)

Since the languages and records that can give a history to the Caribbean and an origin for its literatures "got lost" from discourse, the archive, and historical memory, the poet advocates for a genesis and a history to be found in oral traditions, "in the archives of the shaman and the griot and the bard's memory" (n.pag.). Thus, a historic sense can be reconstructed through a mnemonic poetic knowledge that is stored in the archive of poetry's memory, its oral traditions, since just like the "Noun" and the "Number," the "Word" also and still "illuminates every race." In so arguing, Walcott proposes not only a notion of poetic counter-archive as that which stores, and yet circulates, what "got lost," but also a poetic logos with which to face the problem of history in the Caribbean. Both poets coincide in clamoring for a poetic knowledge capable of not only recuperating what has been programmatically erased by modernity's political and ideological project and, therefore, of contributing "to legitimizing the pluriversality of knowing," but they also aim to articulate an alternative historic sense (Mignolo 88).

In keeping with the critical precedents outlined by Lezama Lima and Walcott, this dissertation aims to bring to light ways in which modern and modernist American poets have engendered a poetic knowledge that makes visible engagements, contestations, and deflections from modernity's civilizing project. Therefore, in re-visioning poetic origins

that distinctly reimagined the Americas during the first half of the nineteenth century, I examine expressions of decolonizing thinking or “toques ligeros de invisibles causalidades” that were necessary for the articulation of directional causalities through what I call Lezamian images (Lezama Lima, “La dignidad de la poesía” 55; “subtle touches of invisible causalities”). These Lezamian images or slant poetic images produced after the 1850s participate in history by re-visioning issues of freedom in relation to democracy, at national and transnational levels, and in poesis that crystallizes “la sustancia de lo inexistente” (Ibid 52; “the substance of the nonexistent”). This “substance of the nonexistent,” or poetic fragments, poetically historicized critical knowledges and cultural imaginations that substantiated epistemological, aesthetic, and ethical directional causalities that reorient modernity’s logos, ethos, and teleology, animating *de facto* a symbolic inter-American poetic counter-archive of decolonizing thinking. This is the poetic discourse that gives gravity to an alternative historic sense whose counter-hegemonic directionality continues to be useful for re-examining and reimaging twenty-first century modernities.

While José Lezama Lima might well be considered as the earliest critical voice proposing, in the late fifties, an inter-American perspective to grasp the “American expression,” Ralph Bauer notes the emergence of an inter-American or hemispheric approach to analyze literary productions in Latin American and US-American literary studies in the eighties (234). Despite the significant increase on inter-American studies since the nineties up to the present,[12] there are few works focused on modern or

[12] Along with the growth of inter-American scholarship during the nineties, there was also a “hemispheric turn” in US-American literary and cultural studies that has unfolded

modernist poetry from inter-American perspectives. The extensive national, regional, and transatlantic scholarship on modern American poetry and its modernisms has certainly expanded our knowledge of poetic discourse. However, much of this criticism has also contributed to reinscribe a European and US-American cultural centrality, and to establish essentialist and exceptionalist notions of poesis that often reduce American poetry to instances of "creative" mimesis. The need for comparative approaches that not only critically interpellate and decenter this centrality, but also demystify misrepresentations of the unfolding of American poetic discourse becomes apparent in studies that either analyze influences and confluences from hierarchical perspectives, or that eclipse the inflections, differences, contradictions, and the transhistorical, transgeographical, and transcultural relations that configure the literary traditions and productions of the hemisphere.

Drawing on critical contributions by inter-American and hemispheric studies, postcolonial and decolonizing approaches, I therefore aim to explore entanglements and disjunctions generated between European and US-American centrality and its "exteriority," as manifested in nineteenth-century inter-American poetic discourses. Problematizing and unsettling European and US-American modernity, I intend to contribute to the study of American modern and modernist poetry by providing an understanding of its unfolding that, examining poetics, aesthetics, dialogues,

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complex epistemological, methodological, political, and institutional implications. For a discussion of its connotations see, José David Saldívar's *Trans-Americanity* (2012); Ralph Bauer's "Hemispheric Studies" (2009); Silvia Spitta and Lois Parkinson Zamora's "Introduction: The Americas, Otherwise" (2009); Sophia McClennen's "Inter-American or Imperial American Studies?" (2005); and Djelal Kadir's "America and its Studies" (2003).

commonalities, differences, contradictions, continuities, and transformations vis-à-vis dynamics of engagement, interpellation, and resignification of modernity, can give an account of the cultural and epistemological hemispheric plurality and heterogeneity that have been denied and veiled for far too long. From this perspective, with the oblique poetic images I trace in this dissertation I aspire to shed light not only on issues that remain at stake in our American modernities, but also on directions that the necessary process of re-visioning, re-cognition,[13] and reimagination of modernity should consider in order to produce "the substance of the nonexistent" that should give gravity to a possible future.

[13] I use the word 're-cognition' as understood by Sara Ahmed and Djelal Kadir, that is, as "the cognition of that which is already known and predetermined by political economy in mostly predictable ways," in which as Kadir notes the prefix 're-' sends us back "to an anteriority to be recuperated and to a knowledge that, as memory, is at once primal and residual" (Ahmed qtd. in Kadir, *Memos from the Besieged City* (2011) 93; Kadir 93).

CHAPTER I

REIMAGINING THE AMERICAS: NINETEENTH-CENTURY INTER-AMERICAN POETIC DISCOURSE THROUGH THE PASTORAL

The Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian traditions were paramount sources of knowledge in Europe during the age of conquest. They propelled the invention of the New World and its culture marking the beginning of the cultural history of classicism and Christianism in the Americas. As Edmundo O'Gorman demonstrates, America was not discovered but rather invented through a complex historical, ideological, and hermeneutic process that "ended by endowing the newly-found lands with a proper and peculiar meaning of their own" (124). Such meanings resulted not only from the "cultural crossing where the world views of Medioaevum and Renaissance" mingled bringing forth a quest in which "the progress of the soul was no longer toward a Golden Age of yore but in an investment in the features of futurity, whether Elysian fields or Arcadian *eutopias*," but also from the interactions between the European and Indian American rationalities and imaginaries, as Kim Beauchesne and Alessandra Santos, and Aníbal Quijano argue (Kadir, *Columbus and the Ends of the Earth* (1992) 2-3).[14] The age of discovery and the invention of America involved a transcultural and transhistorical summa of utopian imaginaries that prompted Europe to stage its own historical dream as the possibility of a new beginning for the West and enact its attempts to realize a more egalitarian justice, or as Alfonso Reyes stated "una libertad mejor entendida, una felicidad más completa y

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[14] For a study that examines utopian thinking and its relevance in Latin America cultural and literary productions see, Kim Beauchesne and Alessandra Santos eds., *The Utopian Impulse in Latin America* (2011).

mejor repartida entre los hombres, una soñada república, una Utopía" (58; "[a] liberty more real, and happiness more complete and better distributed among men; a republic like those the sages dreamed of, a Utopia"; Charles Ramsdell 76). Therefore, and drawing from Reyes, Octavio Paz asserted, "nuestro continente es la tierra, por naturaleza propia, que no existe por sí, sino como algo que se crea y se inventa … Lo que nos funda no es lo que fue América, sino lo que será" (297; "by its very nature, our continent is the land that does not exist of itself, but as something that is created and invented …What establishes us is not what America was, but what it will be"; Ruth L. C. Simms 272). Future and poesis thus characterize America, transforming the continent into a utopian space whose *raison d'être* lies as much in what is uncreated as in that which gives it existence: its land, its nature.

As the Renaissance marked a re-birth of classicism in Europe, the Greco-Roman tradition and especially Virgil's texts were essential in the staging of the New World as a remote, bountiful virgin land in need of cultivation. While the arcadian ideal was certainly insufficient to face the hardships of colonization, Virgil's *Georgics* became instrumental to establish a utilitarian notion of nature that legitimated, as Ken Hiltner observes, that agricultural "Labor omnia vicit" ["Labor conquers all"] (Virgil qtd. in Hiltner 159). The European colonizing and civilizing enterprise conjoined nature and economy, or the *arcadian* and *imperial* perspectives toward nature, as Donald Worster calls them, through pastoral and georgic texts that endowed the Americas with meanings and valuations that, as Julio Ortega argues, interpolate and antagonize discourses of abundance, scarcity, and utopia (Timothy Sweet 5; Ortega 10). Raymond Williams in his discussion of the classical pastoral notes that besides the ideal tone and imagery

represented in idyllic landscapes and a Golden Age to come, “there is almost invariably a tension with other kinds of experience: summer with winter; pleasure with loss, harvest with labour; singing with a journey; past or future with the present” (18). Although the historical transformation of the European pastoral since Virgil, its adaptation according to different socio-cultural contexts and, later, its relationship with romanticism have made it difficult for critics to find a consensus on what the pastoral is, they frequently include within the pastoral tradition works that engage with nature either as a site of leisure or of labor (Sweet 2).

In fact, the modern inter-American pastorals we shall examine often conflate arcadian and utilitarian stances toward nature. Therefore, we consider the pastoral as a broad and flexible literary form that not only encompasses various genres that reverberate in different ways with attitudes, themes, and tones present in Virgil’s texts, but also addresses issues of representation, producing ambivalent responses to changing socio-cultural and political contexts. The processes of emancipation and nation-building, the abolition of slavery, industrialization, the consolidation of Europe’s global hegemony, and the rise of the United States of America as an imperial power during the nineteenth century brought about cultural, economic, political, and geopolitical changes that resulted in the creation of a foundational and emancipatory ethos that propelled poetic reconfigurations of the hemisphere that engaged with the pastoral tradition. What follows in this chapter is a re-vision of prose and poetic texts produced in the Americas during the first half of the nineteenth century that articulates a gallery of foundational poetic images that through the lens of the pastoral brings forth manifold re-cognitions of America that revived and questioned its utopian character. In doing so, I examine ways in which

neoclassicism and romanticism coalesce in works by the American poets Ralph Waldo Emerson, Andrés Bello, Esteban Echeverría, Matthew James Chapman, and José María Heredia, producing distinct pastorals. As we shall see, their modern pastorals created poetic origins that not only helped constitute the foundations of their national literatures, but that also reimagined America, reanimating its utopian character multifariously and yielding manifestations of decolonizing thinking that heightened the process of political and cultural emancipation in the hemisphere.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON'S AMERICA, THE UNSUNG POEM

Literary critics often allude to ruptures and continuities of neoclassicism in romanticism by identifying the Greco-Roman tradition, as well as the German, French, and British romanticism as some of the main springs whence nineteenth-century inter-American poets drank. Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) was aware of our perennial indebtedness to the past and tradition, and of the acts of appropriation, combination, adaptation, and innovation that mediate our relationship with them.[15] As he argued,

> [o]ur knowledge is the amassed thought and experience of innumerable minds, our language, our science, our religion, our opinions, our fancies we have inherited … But there remains the indefeasible persistency of the individual to be himself. One leaf, one blade of grass, one meridian, does not resemble another. Every mind is different; and the more it is unfolded, the more pronounced is that difference. (8: 200-201)

[15] For an inter-American study that addresses Emerson alongside other American authors considering the relations between the past and tradition in the production of historical imagination in literature, see Lois Parkinson Zamora's *The Usable Past: The Imagination and History in Recent Fiction of the Americas* (1997).

Emerson's writings and the worldliness[16] of his texts attest his knowledge of European idealism, romanticism, (neo)classicism, Indian philosophy, history, religion, politics and science, suggesting to us that knowing the past and the epistemological genealogies that configure experience is as necessary as it is to strive for originality, if we aim to transform reality. Hence, the need of unfolding individual difference appears as essential to know and grasp what makes us unique and, therefore, different as individuals, peoples, cultures. A task that became significantly more pressing in a context where the identity and history of the new-born nation were under construction.

Emerson's cultural critique makes apparent that he did not retreat from the political arena and that he rather aimed, as Eduardo Cadava states, "to re-treat or rethink the nature of the political in terms of questions of representation. This act of rethinking coincides with an obligation that, for Emerson, has everything to do with the meaning of America" (11). His works underscore his involvement with issues of culture and politics as much as do his conservatism and idealism, revealing contradiction as symptomatic and constitutive of his Janus-faced poetics and intellectual praxis. During the first half of the nineteenth century, Emerson's America continued to build its foundations through an intensive process of resignification of self-representations.[17] Industrialization, growing urbanization, slavery, the rise of financial capitalism, inward and outward expansion

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[16] Or the circumstantial reality in which texts are enmeshed, as Edward Said put it in "The Text, the World, The Critic" (1975).

[17] Although the imperial vocation of the United States can be noted long before its foundation as a nation, for example through the Puritan ideology of John Winthrop's city on a hill appointed to lead the destinies of nations and civilization (1630) and Thomas Paine's pre-independence pamphlet "Common Sense" (1776), the enactment of the foreign policy toward Latin American countries commonly known as the "Monroe Doctrine" (1823) officialized the U.S. participation in the ongoing western imperial race.

endorsed by ideologies of race, and the Manifest Destiny were aspects that constituted the reality of his writings. In his famous oration "The American Scholar" (1837), the poet exhorted the American intellectuals to become, like himself, scholars committed with both the reimagination and building of the age. Stressing how "[p]ublic and private avarice make the air we breathe thick and fat," Emerson ardently called for the cultural independence from Europe, which was to be achieved by educating the intellectuals in nature, history, and action. As he contended, disengagement or "inaction" with the construction and contingency of our times was, and continues to be, "cowardice" (1: 94). He thus urged the scholars to not retreat to the woods nor to "trust the revenue of some single faculty, and exhaust one vein of thought," but rather to partake in the unfolding of culture by taking up into themselves "all the ability of the time, all the contributions of the past, all the hopes of the future," or by encompassing "all" without limits (1: 97, 113). Taking advantage of the past, the present and the prospects of the future, intellectuals should awaken society from dreams that place money and power as the highest aspirations, and guide it to a revolution that was "to be wrought by the gradual domestication of the idea of Culture" (1: 107). While Emerson recognized that the scholars' civic and ethical responsibility and work were essential to progressively tame or civilize the prevailing state of mind, his major hopes were in the poet(s) to-come. A self-fashioned poet-prophet himself, he did not hesitate to foretell that poetry "will revive and lead in a new age, as the star in the constellation Harp" (1: 82).

The ongoing historical transformations, the prevailing foundational and emancipatory ethos, and the prophetic and civil role Emerson ascribed to poetry and the

poet to-come unmistakably resonate with Virgil's eclogue IV. There, Virgil announced the coming of a renewed Golden Age and a prodigious child by claiming:

> [o]urs is the crowning era foretold in prophecy:
> Born of Time, a great new cycle of centuries
> Begins. Justice returns to earth, the Golden Age
> Returns, and its first-born comes down from heaven above. (C. Day Lewis 10)

Although the birth of this child was often interpreted during the Middle Ages as the advent of Christ, for Emerson this was the coming of the poet: nature's child. In this way, the classical shepherd dresses in romantic attire to re-incarnate the modern poet-prophet who was to lead society to re-cognize its relation or correspondence with nature through history and language, and that was to prefigure the advent of a new Arcadia where the link between nature and culture was to be restored. According to Leo Marx, the speaking subject in a number of works of nineteenth-century US-American authors (among which he includes the 'I' in Emerson's *Nature*) tends "to connect the recovery of self with the recovery of the natural" (54). He calls this tendency "the pastoral impulse" or "a desire, in the face of the growing power and complexity of organized society, to disengage from the dominant culture and to seek out the basis for a simpler, more satisfying mode of life in a realm "closer," as we say, to nature" (Ibid).

Admittedly, Emerson's idyllic and romantic representations of unspoiled nature favor such interpretations. However, a closer look at his *Nature* (1836), for example, shows that "the greatest delight which the fields and woods minister, is the suggestion of an occult relation between man and the vegetable" (1: 10). This mysterious relation that allures the poet, and which is accessible to everybody yet only seen by those with an

attentive eye, encodes neither a nostalgia for a lost or vanishing nature, nor a withdrawal from "the dominant culture." Rather, it points to Emerson's re-cognition and dialogue with the ancient tradition of hermetic and occultist thought that conveyed "la visión del mundo como un sistema de correspondencias y a la visión del lenguaje como doble del universo" from the Renaissance through the twentieth century, which Octavio Paz early identified as a common feature in modern and modernist inter-American poetry (10; "the vision of the universe as a system of correspondences, and of language as the universe's double"; Philips vi). Although Paz highlighted the presence of the Western tradition of analogical thought in U.S. modernist poetic discourse in Poe and Whitman, he missed a crucial link in this inter-American poetic "chain of affinity" Emerson (2: 16). Like modern and modernist poets across the Americas during the nineteenth and twentieth century, Emerson rediscovered and passed on the analogy or the understanding that everything in nature has a symbolic sense and is in close correspondence with the universe, as Emmanuel Swedenborg (whom, Emerson as well as European and American Symbolist and some Parnassian poets admired) argued (Álvaro Cardoso Gomes 19).

Emerson had a keen interest in grasping the correspondences between human and natural history and between language and nature, which became critical venues whereby he engaged with issues of culture and politics. Despite his acknowledgement of the picturesque's critique of fake society, he rejected notions of nature as *natura naturata*. Instead, he contended that "a dilettantism in nature is barren and unworthy … the beauty of nature must always seem unreal and mocking, until the landscape has human figures" (3: 177, 178). Drawing from the tradition of the analogy as well as from neoclassic and romantic notions of nature, Emerson, like Samuel Taylor Coleridge, regarded nature as

natura naturans: the process and the result of its endless motion and transformations, in which human history also partakes. As he argued, "[i]f we consider how much we are nature's, we need not be superstitious about towns, as if that terrific or benefic force did not find us there also, and fashion cities" (3: 182, 183). Human life and its history belonged and were constitutive of that ever changing and intertwined whole that is Nature. As the poet discussed with the picturesque, the beauty of nature seems deceptive and unnatural "until the landscape has human figures," or until nature becomes landscape, that is to say, when nature turns into cultured nature. In his *Nature*, man and nature follow their own laws and designs; man's will, order, and invention do not antagonize nature's because they, too, are "nature's." Emerson amalgamates the romantic principle of creation, in which the human mind also participates, the neoclassic ideal of order imposed by the reason of progress, and the analogical view of the universe in the production of a poetic image that outlines a modern Arcadia where nature and culture coexist in harmony.

Unlike European romantics who reacted against the increasing urbanization and industrialization of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, for Emerson labor, cities, factory-villages, and mechanical forces were neither threats nor oppositions to nature. They were works of art, which he saw "fall within the great Order not less than the bee-hive, or the spider's geometrical web" (3: 19). As metaphors of labor, ideal society and industrial designing, "the bee-hive" and "the spider's geometrical web" suggest the poet's belief that "in America such a balance between industrial progress and natural beauty could achieve physical reality" (Edwin C. Hagenstein et al. 107). Emerson reimagined and prefigured "such a balance" in his modern pastoral, producing a poetic image of

nineteenth-century America that not only aligns "with the New World *telos*, of which the land itself was the prophecy – fact and promise entwined," but also reanimates its utopian nature, reinscribing it as future and poesis (Sacvan Bercovitch 8). His study and knowledge of the correspondences between nature and culture made him stress that man with his imagination has drawn from nature to create culture and, therefore, that analogical thinking and imagination were conduits that bridged mind and matter. In this correlation between human and natural history, however, he tells us that "[a]ll the parts [of nature] incessantly work into each other's hands for the profit of man" (1: 8). Though he admitted that the unity he found in the country was not present in the city and often depicted nature as untouched by artificial life, agricultural and modern labor, he, like Goethe, was allured by the dialectics. Hence, his poetic image of the American landscape crystallizes and enforces the logos of nineteenth-century U.S. modernity by subsuming oppositions into "the great Order."

As mentioned earlier, Emerson addressed the relationship between thought and nature by exploring the dependence of language on nature, which he noted, for example, in ways that words, proverbs, fables, and parables have borrowed from natural facts. However, in his view, the distance of modern man from nature had not only resulted in a relative loss of his power as an interpreter of natural symbols and inventor of new imagery, but also in the fossilization of language. Hence, "[w]e live in a system of approximations … Our music, our poetry, our language itself are not satisfactions, but suggestions … The appearance strikes the eye everywhere of an aimless society, of aimless nations" (3: 190, 192). His insistence on coming closer to nature in order to re-cognize the socio-cultural and political frames that predetermine language and its organic

nature and, in this way, bring it back to its poetic origins signals his efforts to renew poetic language and re-present America. For the poet, nature is the archive of language and "language is the archives of history" yet, as he interrogated by quoting Napoleon, "'[w]hat is History … but a fable agreed upon?'" (3: 21; 2: 9). If history is a consensual fable, "and we learn to prefer imperfect theories, and sentences, which contain glimpses of truth," he challenges: "[w]hy should not we have a poetry and philosophy of insight and not of tradition, and a religion by revelation to us, and not the history of theirs?" (1: 3, 70). The poet struggled to relink culture and nature by clamoring for language's de-fossilization or renovation, as well as for the establishment of a novel relation with nature, the past, tradition, and the present.

As his questioning of U.S. representations and history's truthfulness as discourses rooted in a language whose transformation has ceased emphasizes, the past and the present with their discourses need to be made usable through constant critical re-vision and transformation. According to Emerson, there exists "creative reading as well as creative writing," which not only means to make the past, tradition, and the present usable in ways that allow the possibility of invention, but also that their usefulness should correlate with the needs of present experience and its potential as means to articulate futurity (1: 93). Along this line, Eduardo Cadava examines metaphors related to climate in Emerson's writings by demonstrating their relation with politics and history through his engagement with the abolitionist cause. Cadava notes that Emerson's appeal to nature's laws questions arguments that invoked natural law to support slavery since the creation of the constitution. In so doing, the poet aligned himself with a tradition of figures that used the rhetoric of nature's laws against slavery in order "to exhibit the

moral defect of the legal system and so begin the important work that necessarily precedes any legal reform” (53).

With regard to creative writing, Emerson hoped for the advent of the poet-prophet who was going to bring language back to its primal origin by transforming imagination into a circuit that was to re-attach mind and matter. The poet-to-come was to give expression to nature’s ceaseless metamorphosis and to create new symbols that would, in turn, liberate our imagination, thus, making us feel like children. By yielding new relations with nature “or nests of worlds; for, the metamorphosis once seen, we divine that it does not stop,” the poet becomes an inventor that infused by the romantic sublime will draw us with love, terror, fascination, and in numinous ways to a “new scene” (3: 30, 33). However, as this poet has not been born yet, the confessions Emerson’s age demands, “our stumps and their politics, our fisheries, our Negroes, and Indians, our boasts, and our repudiations … the northern trade, the southern planting, the western clearing, Oregon, and Texas are unsung” (3: 37, 38). Consequently, he summons the poets to persist in this quest, projecting the realization of his utopia into the future or in the advent of a new Arcadia where the genius of the poet to-come will group “[a]ll the creatures, by pairs and by tribes, pour into his mind as into a Noah’s ark, to come forth again to people a new world … O poet! a new nobility is conferred in groves and pastures, and not in castles, or by the sword-blade, any longer” (3: 40, 41). Although the poet’s evocation of both *Genesis* and Virgil’s pastures in his final call to retreat from the castles, or from dominant culture and its institutions, to nature might be interpreted as a desire to withdraw from reality, it rather highlights the unsuitableness of the present to bring into realization his American Arcadia. Bringing together neoclassic, romantic, and

Puritan ideologies, Emerson called for a return to nature as cultured nature, or as a space whence a renewed historical trajectory could be produced and launched. America is thus revived as future and as poesis, a poem that remains unsung.

ANDRÉS BELLO'S AMERICA, THE UNFINISHED POEM

Like Emerson, who became one of the most prominent intellectuals of the United States during the nineteenth century, Venezuelan-born Andrés de Jesús María y José Bello López (1781-1865) would emerge as one of the most influential scholars in Spanish America. Andrés Bello embodied the scholar whom Emerson had called for; his participation in his socio-historical and political context as a poet, philologist, translator, educator, diplomat, and senator is attested to by an extensive interdisciplinary production that ranged over subjects as varied as literature, philosophy, history, grammar, law, and politics.[18] Bello was a foundational figure of nineteenth-century American history and culture whose scholarly production continues to be significant to understand our modern and contemporary contingencies. The political independence from Spain and the constitution of the national states brought about a process of cultural, political and economic reorganization in which the intellectuals and "letrados," or literate men who engaged with writing, as Ángel Rama argued, played a central role. The emerging national literatures performed several functions in this process, among which was the construction of national imaginaries that were to symbolically appropriate the land, map out different kinds of boundaries, and redefine the relationship between nature and

[18] Upon his return from his stay in London, Andrés Bello moved to Chile where he lived from 1829 to 1865 and became the intellectual and ideological architect of the Chilean republic.

culture. Bello's aspirations, like Emerson's, were hemispheric and global in scope. Both poets ascribed a civil role to poetry and considered American modern poetry as part of world literature and as the possibility of giving birth to an expression appropriate to sing America. His engagement with the construction of an Americanist imaginary and the cultural emancipation of Spanish America is not only reflected in his poetic and scholarly productions, but also in the magazines *Biblioteca Americana* (1823) and *Repertorio Americano* (1826-1827) that he helped found. These short-lived miscellaneous publications conveyed Americanist thought and were oriented toward educating Spanish American intellectuals interdisciplinarily. There, he published his famous *silvas* "Alocución a la poesía" (1823) ["Allocution to Poetry"] and "Agricultura de la zona tórrida" (1826) ["Ode to Tropical Agriculture"].

Bello started to publish poetry around 1800. From his early works, as critics (Miguel Antonio Caro, Menéndez Pelayo, Pedro Grases, Fernando Paz Castillo, Emir Rodriguez Monegal) have observed, to the publication of "Alocución a la poesía" and "Agricultura de la zona tórrida," his poetry evinces a coexistence of neoclassicism and romanticism. Miguel Gomes examines this convergence in Bello's *silvas*, arguing that his invention in his effort to "consolidar un lenguaje propio" lies in the creation of a form that celebrating the American geography and the struggles for independence with its heroes transforms the Spanish traditional *silva* into the "American silva," inaugurating a genre and a "vehículo de una escritura americanista" (187; "to consolidate a language of

his own"; "vehicle of an Americanist writing").[19] Although the *silva* as a genre dates as far back as the I century, Gomes points out that it was revived during the Renaissance (usually praising Homer, Virgil, and Hesiod), and that had a significant impact among Spanish authors of the Golden Age. The latter kept it as a heterogeneous form to address rural and nature-related themes, and added with Luis de Góngoras's "Las soledades" (1613) the figure of a pilgrim that wanders in the country (184-186).

Thus, by dialoguing with the European pastoral tradition, especially with Virgil's poetic triad (that is, his *Eclogues*, *Georgics*, and *Aeneid*) and with authors of the Spanish Golden Age, Bello's modern pastoral articulated a poetic image that provided America with a new beginning that, like Emerson's, was grounded on its nature understood as *natura naturans*: the fact and the possibility upon which the cultural and economic progress of the Spanish American independent nations relied. His American *silvas* and their paradoxical history as fragments of an unfinished poem or, as critics have speculated, nonexistent, and therefore utopian, poem titled "América," bear witness to his attempts to bring into existence an Americanist poetic expression suitable for re-founding the continent by using and transforming a genre that metrically allegorizes its vastness.

Nodding at the classics, his "Alocución a la poesía" opens with an apostrophic invocation to the "Divine Poetry" so that she leaves Europe, or that "región de luz y miseria" where "la corrupción cultura se apellida," for the nascent America whose

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[19] Among the poets that cultivated the American *silva*, Gomes notes José Joaquin Olmedo, José María Heredia, Luis Alejandro Blanco, Félix Soublette, and Marco Antonio Saluzzo.

"colores mil a tus pinceles brindan" (34, 44, 16; "region of wretchedness and light"; "and corruption bears the name of culture"; "offer a thousand colors to your brushes"; Frances M. López-Morillas 8, 7). The Muse is prompted to fly over the Atlantic to sing "a otro mundo, a otras gentes … / do viste aún su primitivo traje / la tierra, al hombre sometida apenas" (55-57; "to other heavens, other folk, another world / where earth still dress its ancient dress / and man has scarcely conquered"; 8). In opposition to the corrupted and decadent Old World, America, once again, embodies an Arcadia whose exuberance and fertility impregnate her with the future, as her "primitivo traje" and the partial domination of the land by agricultural labor emphasize. America, "del antiguo Océano hija postrera," has come of age, emancipating herself from the relegated position to which Europe had subjected her to be "del Sol joven esposa" (59-60; "last daughter of old Ocean"; "the sun's young bride"; Ibid). In this way, Bello waits neither for the muse to wake up and awaken "algún sublime ingenio," nor for the advent of the poet who will sing America's revelations (313; "some higher genius"; 15). Hence, he leaves the castles and swords behind to become the "Marón Americano" that is to sing the wheat crops, the flocks, "el rico suelo al hombre avasallado, / y las dádivas mil con que la zona / de Febo amada al labrador corona" (190,192-194; "American Vergil"; "the rich soil overcome by man, / the thousands gifts with which the Torrid Zone / beloved of Phoebus, crowns its children's toil"; 12).

Alluding to Publius Virgilius Maro (70-19 B.C.) and incarnating the "American Vergil," the poet restages America as an Arcadia, re-cognizing the offspring of the union between Phoebus and America through a lens that merges romantic, arcadian, and georgic perspectives of nature, and proposing cultured or cultivated nature as the present

and future of the American nations. As he would later reassert in “Agricultura de la zona tórrida,” his modern Arcadia avowedly follows the road taken by “triumphant Rome” when “fió las riendas del estado / a la mano robusta / que tostó el sol y encalleció el arado” (127-129; “… she gave / the reins of state to the strong hand / tanned by the sun and hardened by the plow”; 32). In so doing, Bello not only symbolically consolidated the political independence of America, outlining “todo el programa ‘siglo XIX’ de engrandecimiento material con la cultura como ejercicio y corona” as Pedro Henríquez Ureña argued, but also contested prevailing discourses that rendered America as ahistorical *natura naturata* or “pure nature,” as Alvaro Kaempfer also notes (Henríquez Ureña 12; “the whole program of material growth of the ‘XIX century’ with culture as praxis and crown”; Kaempfer 478).

His *silvas* return to America’s mythopoesis to create an origin that stabilizes and organizes the postcolonial context through an Americanist imaginary that honors cultured nature and patriotism, adjusting cultural difference, racial, and land related conflicts. For the poet, America was an Arcadia when “la libertad sin leyes florecía, / todo era paz, contento y alegría” under the rule of Huitaca and Nenqueteba (the Moon goddess and the Sun god in Muisca mythology) (115-116; “freedom thrived, and all / was peace, content, and joy”; 10). And, it continues to be in the golden and bountiful valleys of Chile where “la inocencia y el candor ingenuo / y la hospitalidad del mundo antiguo / con el valor y el patriotismo habitan?” (77-79; “where innocence and ingenuous candor dwell / and old-world hospitality combines / with courage and with love of country?”; 9). While the

Muisca people[20] were progressively displaced and dispossessed of their territories during the constitution of the Colombian state, rather than vanishing, the innocent and hospitable "old world" that survived in Chile was, and still is, far from having an idyllic relationship with the state.[21] Bello not only relegated the Indigenous peoples to a mythic past to symbolically occupy and appropriate the land that would ground his utopia, but also subsumed them in the anti-colonial and national discourses through mystifications and tropes like that of the good, brave, or vanishing Indians. His cultural cartography harmonized and dehistoricized cultural, racial, and geopolitical conflicts, while enforcing agrarian ideals, rhetorics of civilization, progress, order, governability, and patriotism.

Like Emerson, Bello, too, was dazzled by America's natural beauty. The poet journeyed into its nature by exercising a poetic vision that, as Graciela Montaldo notes, conflated naturalist and romantic insights, which he would have cultivated in his acquaintance with Alexander von Humboldt in Venezuela (10). His modern pastoral depicts the American landscape in vibrant scenes marked by contrasts, as seen, for example, when the itinerant poet, in his "Alocución a la poesía," guided by the Southern

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[20] Or an agrarian civilization of present-day Colombia that is compared in their cultural and socio-political development to the Inca and Aztec civilizations and that continues to live until today.

[21] As an example, the Mapuche people, whose unrelenting defense of their territory from the Spaniards enabled them to retain a significant territory of the country during the colony, joined the royalist forces in considerable numbers against the creoles during the war of independence (José Bengoa 139-142). Certainly, it did not take too long either for the Mapuche people or for other Indigenous peoples who fought against the independence movements across the Americas to discover that the newly independent states' expansion and redrawing of their frontiers would result in multifarious forms of violence leading to their displacement and dispossession of their lands, as continues to happen even today. For a study on Bello's perspectives on the Mapuche people, see Ximena Troncoso's "El retrato sospechoso. Bello, Lastarria y nuestra ambigua relación con los Mapuche" (2003).

Cross fancies "por la espaciosa soledad; / o del cucuy las luminosas huellas / viese cortar el aire tenebroso" (184-186; "through the vast solitude. / Would I could see the firefly's gleam / cutting the dusky air"; 11). As well as, through his catalogue of agricultural products where

> la verde palta, da el añil su tinta,
> bajo su dulce carga desfallece
> el banano, el café el aroma acendra
> de sus albos jazmines, y el cacao
> cuaja en urnas de púrpura su almendra. (202-206)
>
> [the avocado butter, indigo its dye.
> The banana droops under its sweet burden,
> and coffee concentrates the odor
> of its white blooms, and cocoa
> ripens its bean in purple urns.] (12)

Fascination and mystery drive the poet's sublime in his phenomenological experience of American nature. Yet, the latter also reveals the violence and death of the wars of emancipation that have impregnated her soil with mourning, "¿[q]ué ciudad, qué campiña no ha inundado / la sangre de tus hijos y la ibera?," and its own antagonistic forces, as manifested in earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and floodings (214-215; "[w]hat city and what field have not been bathed / with your sons' blood, and Spaniards' too?"; 12).

Thus, Bello not only inscribes the devastation of the gests of emancipation, its heroes, their braveness and patriotism by symbolically monumentalizing them in the

landscape or culturing *de facto* its nature with history, but also indicates violence as irreducible. America's ceaseless transformations have witnessed its regeneration. Hence, the American Virgil does not hesitate to prophesy,

> Renacerás, renacerás ahora;
> florecerán la paz y la abundancia
> en tus talados campos; las divinas
> Musas te harán favorecida estancia,
> y cubrirán de rosas tus ruinas. (443-447)
>
> [Now you will be reborn; peace and abundance
> will flourish in your devastated fields.
> Divine Muses will make their favored dwelling
> among you, and heap your ruins with roses.] (18)

And so does America in his "Agricultura de la zona tórrida" by weaving "… al verano su guirnalda / de granadas espigas …" and giving "… la caña hermosa, / de do la miel se acendra" (6-7, 18-19; "the summer's wreath of golden grain"; "sweet sugarcane, whose pure sap / makes the world disdain the honeycomb;" 29). Juxtaposing "… el mentido brillo, / el ocio pestilente ciudadano!" to the prospects of the countryside, the poet re-cognizes agriculture as "nodriza de las gentes" and the means to happiness and progress (73-74, 225; "false brilliance / and the city's evil idleness"; "wetnurse of mankind"; 30, 34). Whereas in Emerson's Arcadia the country and city are not antithetical, Bello settles his utopian republic in the country, sparing no efforts to idealize the farmer and country life. As he exhorts, "¿[b]uscáis durables goces, / felicidad, cuanta es al hombre dada … Id

a gozar la suerte campesina / la regalada paz" (160-161, 165-166; "[d]o you seek lasting joys, and happiness, / as much as is given to man on earth? … Go and enjoy the farmer's life, his lovely peace"; 32). For, "el campo es vuestra herencia; en él gozaos" he continues, while we wonder along with Julio E. Miranda, whose inheritance is this, and who can enjoy themselves in it? (147; "the land is your heritage; enjoy it"; 32). As Miranda argues, Bello largely avoids addressing the relations of production, property, and power associated with the land, at times, only discretely suggesting them (157-158). In fact, his Arcadia effaces the resistance, dispossession, and appropriation of Indigenous lands, as well as the asymmetrical power relations related to land production.

Echoing Virgil's *Georgics* Book I, where "[t]he wicked War-god runs amok through all the world" taking the farmers and "leaving the fields unattended," Bello pleads for peace and healing, "cerrad, cerrad las hondas / heridas de la Guerra," emphasizing the lack of agricultural industry and urging the American nations to work their lands, that is, to sow their futures (Lewis 39; Bello 203-204; "heal, oh heal / the bitter wounds of war"; 33). As we have seen in Emerson, the processual and utilitarian notions toward nature also represent constitutive features of Bello's pastoral. Although his silvas aimed to reconcile the antagonism between georgic and arcadian ideals, America, as it was in the beginning, is (re)founded on violence. By eclipsing the violence inflicted upon the legitimate owners and inheritors of America's lands and underscoring nature's untamable destructiveness, the poet suggests violence as impelling America's utopian character and its ability to recreate itself and produce futurity as nature does. Bello's re-foundational project appears as indivisible from the constitution of a seemingly unifying Americanist imaginary elaborated upon discourses of cultural, racial, and ethnic

harmony, civilization, and patriotism that turned into an essential rhetorical and ideological tool during the processes of independence and nation-building. In spite of the fact that his project of modernization is built on oppositions such as old/new world, civilization/barbarism, country/city, he does not dispense with what he finds usable of European culture and tradition in redrawing America's historical course in the national and republican context. Bello's pastoral transforms the American natural space into an organic archive that, as any archive, selectively stores the past of its peoples and cultures, the present, and their possibilities of futurity which he explores and delineates in his modern Arcadia. A new beginning for America that is to be continued and transformed by other poets whose "ingenio más feliz, más docta pluma / su grata patria encargo tal comete" ("Alocución a la poesía" 823-824; "grateful fatherland / deserves a finer mind, a more polished pen / for such a lofty purpose"; 28).

ESTEBAN ECHEVERRÍA'S AMERICA: INTERROGATING UTOPIA

Like Emerson and Bello, the Argentine poet, scholar, and political activist Esteban Echeverría (1805-1851) not only participated in the construction of the American "lettered cities," to continue with Ángel Rama's felicitous phrase, and their national literatures, but also advocated for the cultural and political emancipation of the Americas by embracing the ideals of the Enlightenment and the Americanist rhetoric. As a *letrado* and member of the Asociación de Mayo [Association of May] and the Generación de 1837 [Generation of 1837],[22] Echeverría played a central role in the foundation of

[22] which were intellectual and socio-political movements recognized for opposing Juan Manuel de Rosas's rule and for reactivating the ideals of the revolution of independence

Argentine literature and in the articulation of a cultural and political project that sought to organize and redirect the course of the nascent nation. This project, as his *Dogma Socialista* [*Socialist Dogma*] (1846) and Pedro Luis Barcia's study of the poet's most unexamined works show, placed a great emphasis on the need to educate the people as a means to achieve a progressive development of democracy (Barcia 654).

Beginning in the nineteenth century critics have argued that Echeverría's popular poem "La Cautiva" ["The Captive"] (1837) constitutes a foundational inscription of the Pampa in the national and literary imaginary; a purpose that he actually makes manifest in the monitory "Advertencia" ["Forward"] to his poem. In this prefatory text, the poet presents the Desert as the abundant inheritance left by the wars of independence, a space that was to be exploited and poetically appropriated by the emerging national literature. In his words, "[e]l Desierto es nuestro más pingüe patrimonio, y debemos poner conato en sacar de su seno, no sólo riqueza para nuestro engrandecimiento y bienestar, sino también poesía para nuestro deleite moral y fomento de nuestra literatura nacional" (208, 209; "the Desert is our most abundant property, and we must make an effort to extract from it not only riches for our progress and welfare, but also poetry for our moral enjoyment and promotion of our national literature"). According to Carlos Altamirano and Beatriz Sarlo, "La Cautiva" not only concentrates and crystallizes themes that had already been outlined, but also updates them inaugurating an iconography of the Desert that was to be rehearsed in Argentine frontier literature for the rest of the century (39). In this regard, Lelia Area discusses the romantic utopian import of Echeverría's undertaking

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by connecting them with democracy as a way to progress. While the emergence of the Asociación de Mayo is often indicated between 1837 and 1838, Eros Nicola Siri points out that the Association had its first session on June 23, 1833 (Siri 26).

in “La Cautiva” and *Dogma Socialista* in conjunction with the program of regeneration of the nation attempted by the Generation of 1837 and their establishment of the Desert as a literary theme, and as a “metonimia de Utopía, el país donde no ha ocurrido la historia, el grado cero del tiempo histórico,” the land of the “exiliados de una nación inexistente a la que tratan de dar objetiva existencia pero ideal a través de un corpus literario” (118, 121; “metonymy of Utopia, the country where history has not occurred, the zero degree of historic time”; “exiled of a nonexistent nation to which they try to give an objective yet ideal existence through a literary corpus”).

Indeed, the large area of Pampa, commonly known as the Desert for its vast, barren and uncultivated terrain, was transformed into a utopian space where a new beginning for the nation could be staged in both discourse and the collective imagination. However, in “La Cautiva” we can also observe how the poet’s increasing skepticism and disappointment with the young nation are symptomatized in a tense dialectics that depicts the Desert as a territory where utopian and dystopian perspectives coalesce and clash. Therefore, we examine Echeverría’s poetic collection *Los consuelos* (1834) [*Consolations*] and the poem “La Cautiva” so as to explore how the poet ventures into the American natural space by articulating a pastoral that revives, and yet interrogates America as a utopia, suggesting the inviability of the Desert in “La Cautiva” as a utopian space where the future of the Argentine nation can be grounded. Considered as the forerunner of romanticism in Argentina, Echeverría argued that romanticism “es la poesía moderna que fiel a las leyes del arte no imita, ni copia, sino que busca sus tipos y colores, sus pensamientos y formas en sí mismo, en su religión, en el mundo que lo rodea y produce con ello obras bellas originales” (161-162; “is the modern poetry that faithful to

the laws of art neither imitates nor copies, but rather seeks its types and colors, its thoughts and forms in itself, in its religion and in the world that surrounds it, producing with them beautiful and original works"). In his view, the classic genius differed from the romantic genius in that the former "se goza en la contemplación de la materia y de lo presente," whereas the latter "se mece entre la memoria de lo pasado y los presentimientos del porvenir" (161; "delights himself in the contemplation of matter and of that which is present"; "swings between the memory of the past and the premonitions of the future"). Despite his claims, *Los Consuelos* and "La Cautiva" illustrate ways in which "types and colors" of (neo)classicism and romanticism merged in his poetic and aesthetic endeavors, propelling utopian impulses and animating his palette to re-cognize the past and the present, as well as to sketch the future.

Los consuelos, the first published book of poetry of Argentine literature according to Barcia, were written between 1827-1832, a period between Echeverría's sojourn in France (1826-1830) and his return to a country torn by the civil war between *Federalists* and *Unitarians*[23] (Barcia 635). The contemplation and experience of the present, which appears as a contentious frontier between the past and the future, inevitably bring about melancholy, despair, and a sense of loss and exile that mark the tone of his "*Consolations*." The poet feels exiled and betrayed by a present that keeps the promises of the revolutionary past unfulfilled, as "El poeta enfermo" ["The Sick Poet"] states: "[g]loriosos lauros las divinas musas/ Me prometieron, y guirnalda bella / A la sien tierna de la patria mía / Yo preparaba" (13-16; "glorious laurels the divine muses / promised

[23] Echeverría fiercely opposed Juan Manuel de Rosas's dictatorial rule, main leader of the Federalist Party.

me, and a laurel wreath / to the tender head of my beloved fatherland / I prepared"). His fatherland has turned into the home of shadows and sadness, a wretched earth that disowns virtue and the poetic genius that aims to enlighten it, making his existence analogous to that of a "planta en infecundo yermo" (6; "plant in a barren wasteland"). He wishes he were full of hope and optimism to soar high in nature, as José María Heredia did in his poem "Niágara" (1824). As he claims in "Contestación" ["Response"]:

¡[q]uién como tú pudiera	[w]ho but you could
[………………………….]	[………………………….]
Espaciar sus miradas halagüeñas,	Throw flattering looks,
Y ver por todo imágenes risueñas,	And see in everything cheerful images,
Como en la edad florida! (31, 34-36)	Like in the Golden Age!]

Anguish and a sense of urgency as is common in the *consolatio* genre[24] pervade his poems. Although *Los consuelos* show neither a philosophical, nor an "eschatological dialogue (or series of dialogues) with one or more allegorical instructors, [where] the narrator is reconciled to his misfortunes, shown how to attain his goal, or enlightened and consoled in a similar way," which are commonplace aspects of consolations present in Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*,[25] and in later European texts, Echeverría fuses

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[24] I am indebted to Professor Djelal Kadir for pointing out the *consolatio* genre in connection to Echeverría's poetic collection. While this relation, as far as I know, has been neither stated nor addressed by criticism yet, the trajectory, unfolding, and transformation of the consolatory tradition in general in modern Spanish American literature seem to be largely unexplored.

[25] Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius's *Consolation* (c.480-524) is often considered by critics as a work that "straddled the classical and Christian worlds," introducing a secular connotation in the genre and adapting it in ways that projected its influence throughout the Middle Ages and the early Renaissance (George W. McClure 8).

classicism and romanticism, modernizing the *consolatio* genre in remarkable ways (Michael H. Means 3).

Michael H. Means discusses the pedagogical character of Boethius's text, as revealed in the dialectics between instructor and narrator, and the consolatory and apocalyptic aspects as structural elements that can be found in Dante's *Divine Comedy* and in English poetry from the fourteenth through the early sixteenth centuries. Therefore, he argues that whereas the apocalypse as prophecy and eschatology has been present in consolatory writing since Cicero's *Dream of Scipio* (one of the most well-known Latin consolations), in Boethius's *Consolations* and in later texts the apocalyptic features tend to relate to a "kind of intellectual and ethical pressure" that is conveyed by the teachers, creating "some sense of urgency, at least on the part of the instructors, that contributes to the effect on the narrator – if not on the reader" (Means 11, 16). While I have not found references that indicate Echeverría's interest in the consolation genre, I speculate that his engagement with it might directly come from his admiration of Latin poets in general, and, in particular of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, whose indebtedness to Boethius's *Consolation* has been widely acknowledged by critics and which Echeverría, in his essay "Fondo y forma en las obras de imaginación" ["Form and Content in the Works of Imagination"], regards as one of the greatest modern works, since it conveys the inventive and Protean spirit of romanticism. With the exception of the love poem "Él y Ella," ["He and She"], there are no dialogues in Echeverría's *Consolations*. However, this poem is a song where the male speaker finds solace in the passionate love of his beloved by blending the two voices into one and creating a new narrator called "Ambos" ["Both"]. Whereas the male narrator is consoled throughout the poem, the master/learner

dyad is not only categorically suppressed with the emergence of "Ambos," a voice that in evoking Horace's *memento mori* crowns romantic love as a driving force of life, but also the most traditional *topoi* in consolatory dialogues are changed.

Along this line, and though philosophy and eschatology are significantly present in other poems of the collection through existential themes that stress the poet's misfortunes and overpowering sense of emotional distress, hope allays his suffering and gives him consolation. Yet, this hope is neither in a heavenly world nor in philosophy, but rather in the birth of an independent America. The lack of dialogue in Echeverría's *Consolations* proclaims his coming of age as a romantic poet that, unlike the Dante who reanimates Virgil in his *Divine Comedy*, becomes the master and the prophet who himself is going to teach and announce America's revelations. Hope drives the poet to revive the civil(izing) and prophetic role of poetry in his "Profecía del Plata" ["Prophecy of the River Plate"], impelling his pilgrimage into possibility. The gloomy and terrifying river of La Plata boisterously foretells that America "[g]ozará independiente / El venturoso hado / A su heroísmo y gloria reservado," thus, bridging the political independence of Argentina to the continental project of emancipation (88-90; "[w]ill enjoy in its independence / the fortunate fate / reserved to its glory and heroism"). The national and continental character conflated in his prophecy, along with the shifts in conventions and themes mentioned, signal the aesthetic and formal adaptations that Echeverría made to the European poetic consolatory tradition, as well as ways in which he experimented and combined different genres and traditions in the attempt to emancipate his poesis.

As freedom roars in America, the poet feels invigorated to reanimate the ideals of the revolution of May by rehearsing the moment when the Sol de Mayo [Sun of May]

broke through the sky to symbolically declare Argentina's independence.[26] Like Bello's Phoebus in his silvas, Echeverría's Sun in "En Celebración de Mayo" ["In Celebration of May"] impetuously impregnates the land with "gérmenes divinos" that "[c]recen y se derraman / Por todo el continente americano" (19-20; "divine seeds"; "[g]row and spread themselves / all over the American continent"). The prophecy of the river of La Plata begins to come true as the veil that had prevented the poet from seeing and honoring the liberating Sun that now illuminates Argentina is torn apart, and so "triunfante y gloriosa / La razón aparece, / Y la ominosa esclavitud perece" (76-78; "victorious and glorious / Reason appears, / And the dreadful slavery ends"). Though he encourages other poets to sing to freedom, he also cautions that the deeds of the Sun are not yet consummated, since it is still a promise whose presence in American soil and "[s]us colores brillantes, / Anuncian a la tierra / De América el gran día, / Y del crudo tirano la agonía" (81-84; "its brilliant colors, / announce to the earth / America's great day, / And the cruel tyrant's end"). Despite the dull representations of the fertilizing union between America and the Sun of May, Echeverría reenacts a new beginning where freedom and democracy rise as ideals that can be achieved in America's present and, yet that are to be fully realized in the future. America as future and as creation is revived, as "el gran día" when the continent will be completely emancipated from oppression is being foretold.

Located in the provincial outback of Buenos Aires, the Pampa in "La Cautiva" is introduced with a panoramic view whose vastness overwhelms the poet's sight to the extent that he cannot find "en su vivo anhelo,/ do fijar su fugaz vuelo,/ como el pájaro en

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[26] The Sol de Mayo alludes to the beginning of the revolution for independence in May 1810 and the legend of the sun peeking through the clouds when the First Assembly was constituted.

el mar" (13-15; "in his invigorated desire, / where to fixate his transient flight, / as the bird does in the sea"). He rejoices in the simple marvels God's hand has sown in the Desert, "[l]a humilde hierba, el insecto, / la aura aromática y pura," as well as in the silence and sadness of the magnificent plains (36-37; "[t]he modest herb, the insect, / the fragrant and pure aura"). Wondering "¿[q]ué pincel podrá pintarlas / sin deslucir su belleza?," Echeverría, like Andrés Bello in his "Alocución a la poesía,"[27] uses the classical rhetorical figure of *paralipsis* to foreshadow representations that re-cognize the Pampa, producing a pastoral that emphasizes the modest and, yet, sublime beauty of its incommensurability and local color (46-47; "[w]hat brush could paint them / without spoiling their beauty?"). He thus explores the Desert in different registers of the *mysterium, tremendum et fascinans* that show us not only natural auras and unpretentious herbs entangled in the fields as if they were waving in the deep sea while the sunset burns the horizon, but also how darkness and silence abruptly veil the idyllic scenery to dramatize the violent disruption caused by an Indian raid that makes apparent the frontier between civilization and barbarism, nature and culture, wild country and cultivated city.

His "modesta bucólica bárbara" is composed in nine parts and an epilogue that stage the heroic and dramatic story of the captives Brian and María, their perils and sufferings in their attempt to survive in a territory ruled by the Indians' and nature's barbarism (Altamirano and Sarlo 37; "modest barbarian bucolic"). If in *Los consuelos* Echeverría celebrates the Sun of May and La Plata River in Buenos Aires by linking them to the Americanist project of emancipation, in "La Cautiva" his pilgrimage and

[27] Regarding Echeverría's formal and aesthetic experimentation, Pedro Luis Barcia notes that his novel *Amalia abandonada* (1831), which is written in verse, has one of its three extant parts written in the genre of the *silva* (642).

civilizing mission drives him to the Desert as a utopian space where the corrupted young nation can be regenerated. However, violence, whether coming from the state via military campaigns, the Indigenous peoples, or nature, collapses the possibility of a dialectical synthesis and the utopian prospect of the Desert. Unlike Bello's and Emerson's Arcadias, Echeverría's barbarian Desert problematizes the conflicts of land property, articulating a pastoral that subsumes utopian aspirations and pessimistic views of the present without reconciling them. As seen in the fourth part of the poem, titled "La alborada" ["Dawn"], his Pampean Arcadia oscillates between the violent beauty of the dawn that caresses herbs and flowers while in the cloudy Orient the light timidly appears caressing the fields and tinging them with a chiaroscuro greenness, and a grotesque and horrifying dystopia created by the troops of the campaign that were looking for their leader Brian, who had been taken captive by the Natives.

In this way, the violence of the agents of the state disrupts the bucolic scenery by slaughtering the tribe and leaving "la hierba teñida, / de sangre hedionda, y sembrado / de cadáveres el prado" (114-116; "the herb dyed, / with stinking blood, and the field / sown with corpses"). As we know, Juan Manuel de Rosas had already attempted to cultivate or civilize the Desert through violence with his military campaign in 1833-1834. This was an historical event that Echeverría publicly condemned and that Lelia Area, coinciding with Noé Jitrik, considers that he addresses in "La Cautiva" "como una versión que revisa y corrige la versión oficial" (119; "as a version that revises and corrects the official version"). Indeed, the poet re-visions the official narrative and corrects it by inflicting epistemic violence, rather than direct violence, to civilize the frontier through the mystification of Indigenous peoples, as well as by problematizing violence, race, and

land property as political threats and issues to be solved by the nation. The Desert in his poem is a contested territory in which, despite Brian and María's patriotism, braveness and idyllic love, civilization and progress fail, as the death of the couple and of the children suggests.

Echeverría's works have often been studied under the lens of romanticism. While he overtly rejected imitation and classic formal constraints, he also emphasized that freedom as a driving principle of romanticism turns the latter into a Protean expression. For the poet, "el romanticismo, no reconoce forma ninguna absoluta; todas son buenas con tal que representen viva y característicamente la concepción del artista" (148; "romanticism recognizes no absolute form; all forms are good as long as they in a lively and distinctive way represent the artist's ideas"). Such is the multiform and combinatory spirit we more notably observe in his *Consolations*, as his poems merge genres, modes, and aesthetics in the production of a poetic expression that aims to lead and represent the cultural imagination of his time, re-cognizing America and bringing back to life its utopian character. As *Los consuelos* and "La Cautiva" indicate, these texts symptomatize the tensions between the unfulfilled revolutionary ideals of freedom and democracy of the past, and the violence of the unruly and undemocratic present. In contrast to Emerson and Bello, Echeverría chose to not adjust oppositions as a means to recreate the frontier, offering instead a barbarian pastoral that stresses the prevailing contradictions and interrogates the Desert as a utopian space, ultimately declining to cast it as a utopia.

Matthew James Chapman's Bearded Arcadia[28]

While during the first half of the nineteenth century the construction of the national states, the abolition of the slave trade and slavery in the Americas was an ongoing process, the Caribbean, with the exception of Haiti that declared its independence in 1804, was still occupied by the British, Spanish, Dutch, and French empires. Barbados was colonized by England in 1627. Beginning with the production of tobacco, cotton, and indigo, while mainly relying on British indentured servants, by the 1660s the island had already turned into the main producer of sugar in the Caribbean, as well as into a slave society with nearly 50% of its population consisting of African slaves (Hilary Beckles 20-32). Despite the unfavorable topographical characteristics of the island, the slaves engaged in manifold insurrectional practices that incited rebellions in 1649, 1675, and 1692. In the eighteenth century, however, the process of creolization, the development of a sophisticated military system by the colonial rule, and the concessions the planters granted to the slaves led to a highly stratified society, as well as to forms of non-violent resistance whereby the slaves strove for the improvement of labor conditions and for socio-cultural and economic autonomy, recording no major rebellions until the nineteenth century (Beckles 41-63). The latter and the so-called ameliorative policies created to maintain and reproduce the enslaved labor force in the island gave rise to the myth of the well-treated slave, a fiction that is central to Matthew James Chapman's *Barbadoes* (1833).

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[28] According to Chapman, the Portuguese gave Barbados its name for the bearded fig tree they found there and in neighboring islands (88).

Barbadian-born poet Matthew James Chapman (1796-1865) published his collection *Barbadoes and Other Poems* the same year that the Emancipation Act abolished slavery in the British colonies of the Caribbean. His long poem *Barbadoes* aligns with a Caribbean Anglophone poetic pastoral tradition inaugurated in the eighteenth century with poems such as Nathaniel Weekes' *Barbados* (1754) and James Grainger's *The Sugar-Cane* (1764). Like these authors, Chapman too endorsed a "superficial humane concern for the slaves, coupled with an acceptance of slavery as the Negro's natural lot" (Edward Baugh 229). In fact, while James Grainger supported slavery suggesting that "contemporary slavery in the Caribbean is much less harsh than Ancient Roman slavery," Chapman did so by juxtaposing slavery during the early period of colonization to the current context and emphasizing the improvements in the treatment of slaves since then (John Gilmore 12). In this way, *Barbadoes* embarks on a historical revision that re-cognizes the island's natural space and reconciles the arcadian and georgic perspectives toward nature by mystifying slavery through the myth of the well-treated slaves. Chapman revives the Caribbean Arcadian utopia of the early colonial period and brings it to the present through regressive and anticipatory moves, as is common in utopian thought and discourse, in order to pessimistically prefigure emancipation as a dystopia, the reason of the future decline of the planter class and the British empire.

Journeying back to the age of colonization and settlement, the poet reproduces two well-known mythic narratives in the Caribbean cultural imaginary. On the one hand, the popular tragic romance of Yarico, an Indian woman who falls in love with Inkle, an English trader who later deceives her and sells her into slavery (Sandiford 5), and on the

other hand the story of the last Carib who curses Europe for exterminating his people. The inclusion of the last Carib's monologue and of Yarico's story unarguably dramatizes the Caribs' actual disappearance due to the violence and cruelty of earlier slavery. However, his acknowledgement that "the English rivalled, at least, if they didn't surpass, the Don" in the "enterprise and crime" that resulted from the colonization of America reveals these narratives as providing a historical counterpoint that enables him both to re-cognize the island and to mystify its present (97). Whereas the island's sylvan landscape preserves "the foot-prints of the Indian race" and the marks of deforestation, as he admonishes "[b]e wise ye planters! clothe your hills with trees" to offset the destructiveness of droughts, they also retain the fertility and beauty the settlers found there where "a new England bloomed" (22, 39, 48). In effect, we observe that amid "the bright verdure of those evergreens" and the colorful and fragrant native fruits, the black slaves appear going to work in the plantations with enthusiasm and joy, "[a]ll to their different tasks with speed repair, / Where guides their steps the planter's ruling care. / Each trim plantation, like a garden shines –" (11, 10). By responding to the abolitionists' "lying tales" that denounced the slaves' overwork under the harsh conditions of the tropical weather, Chapman shows us how "[t]he gay troop laughs and revels in the sun" to then continue their enjoyment with their families in their peaceful huts (55).

Barbados is thus transformed into a tropical Arcadia, "[f]anned by cool breezes, laved by loving seas," a utopian space where the slaves "[u]nconscious of the stranger's evil eye" or the abolitionists' eye that disregards how "[t]he experience of our times, and the testimony of history, prove that violent changes in society produce – any thing but good" delight themselves working in the plantations "[n]ow that the brand, the torture,

and the chain" are gone (38, 56, 97, 30). His idyllic depictions of the island not only bring forth his experience of the sublime with fascination and awe, as we observe in the native carnivorous flower that hidden by the sea waters in a cave courts her potential victims with "her beauty and sparkling hue," but also adjust the arcadian and georgic ideal by making "the images of horror flee" (21, 32). While "the experience of our times" in *Barbadoes* asserts that "[r]ebellion has not prospered" because "the slave was trusted, and the master loved," the Haitian revolution and independence in conjunction with the abolition of the slave trade in 1807 had actually contributed to increase the tensions between the slaves and the plantocracy of the island, leading to the first major rebellion of the nineteenth century in the British colonies (Chapman 78, 41). As Beckles points out, the British Caribbean records three big uprisings between the period of abolition of the slave trade and the emancipation in 1838. Whereas the first one took place in Barbados in 1816, the others occurred in Demerara (Guiana) in 1823 and in Jamaica in 1831-1832 (79). Conversely to Chapman's idealized representations of the slaves' happiness and well-being under the paternalistic care of the "impoverished" and "indebted" planters, the slaves in Barbados regarded that the "attempts to ameliorate the hardships of slavery during the late eighteenth century were motivated by slave owners' narrow economic interests and not by humanitarian considerations" (Beckles 78). Hence, their views, the revolutionary sentiments sparked by Haiti's emancipation, and the legal progress in the struggle for emancipation fostered by the abolitionists resulted in what is known as Bussa's rebellion in 1816.

Yet, for the poet the improvement of the labor conditions in Barbados had no historical precedent and so, his "objection is not to ultimate, but to immediate

emancipation" since the latter would put at risk "[t]he integrity of the empire, the life and prosperity of the master, and, above all, the well-being of the slave himself" (98). Therefore, he spares no efforts to accuse the abolitionists of treason and to demonize Haiti's independence by admonishing the planter's class to avoid the Hispaniola's fate by illustrating how the fire of the burned plantations continue to rage where the white women were raped and killed by "the ruthless race," and urging England not to play the ostrich and protect "[t]he peaceful glories of the bearded Isle!" (79, 84). In this way, his imperial pastoral not only foreshadows emancipation as a dystopia, but also invariably endorses British rule and identity. Although Chapman acknowledges the violence and brutality that caused the extermination of the Caribs in the Caribbean, his argument is meant to exemplify the success of the policies of amelioration of the slaves' living conditions and therefore to support the continuation of slavery. Likewise, the myth of the well-treated slaves proves to be functional to the transformation of Barbados into an evergreen Arcadia whose sylvan landscapes and idyllic plantations indicate neither violence nor socio-political conflicts between the slaves and the planters.

However, the omission of the latter as a means to reconcile the arcadian and georgic ideals, and the mythification of emancipation by using Haiti as precedent exceed the ideological and rhetorical contrivances of *Barbadoes*, disclosing the growing instability of the British empire and, consequently, of the colonial establishment in the island as the poet's true concerns. Looking back to Edenic times, Chapman not only charts the island by re-cognizing its nature and spaces to be poeticized, as is the case with the "Romantic Scotland" he discovers in the island, but also reanimates the island's utopian nature by anticipating the "negative" impact that emancipation promises for the

plantocracy and representing its future as a dystopia. Surely, neither the "frowsty fragrance," as Derek Walcott would say, nor the dull poetic craft of Chapman's *Barbadoes* come as a surprise. Yet, the value of texts like this lies in the fact that they articulated and inscribed discursive literary origins for the modern Caribbean Anglophone poetic tradition that as we trace in its unfolding will be re-visioned, challenged, and transformed by later poetic generations.

TRIANGULATING THE AMERICAS: JOSÉ MARÍA HEREDIA'S EXILIC PASTORAL

Nineteenth- and mid-twentieth-century literary criticism largely debated the prevalence of either neoclassicism or romanticism in the works of many of the authors studied here. At present, however, contemporary scholarship approaches their poetics agreeing that both the neoclassical and romantic traditions and aesthetics coexist in their works. Carmen Alemany in her discussion of José María Heredia's poetry brings to the fore this critical understanding when she states that it is more productive to examine his works by grasping "la capacidad que tuvo el autor de asumir el caudal neoclásico y llevarlo, como hicieron los románticos pioneros, a ese grado de modernidad y de nuevo clasicismo que más tarde se llamará romanticismo" (18; "the ability the author had to accept the neoclassic legacy and take it, like the romantic forerunners did, to that degree of modernity and of new classicism that will be later called romanticism"). Heredia's pastoral, like that of all the American poets we have examined so far, absorbs neoclassicism and modernizes it, creating a cultural and aesthetic poetic synthesis that swings between the past and tradition and the future and poetic innovation. Their poetic

expressions evince how the past continues to propel the future, bringing forth poetic and aesthetic shifts we see to emerge in their works. The latter not only bears witness to the poets' engagement with the ongoing process of cultural, aesthetic, and political transformations that were taking place in their time, but also to ways in which they produced liminal, national, and worldly aesthetics and poetics, we tend to observe in their romantic becoming.

Whether looking at the Americas from the top of the Chimborazo, the top of the Barbadian Romantic Scotland, the top of the Popocatépetl, the silent and overwhelming vastness of the Desert, or from the American sylvan valleys, all poets experienced the American nature in registers of the romantic sublime. However, it is in Heredia's poetry, as Lezama Lima early noted, as well as in Emerson's works that we find "una sensibilidad inaugural" (Lezama Lima 20; "an inaugural sensibility"). Heredia's *silva* "Niágara" (1824), for example, offers the finest moments of a poetic 'I' that seeks to reconcile self and nature through the experience of the sublime.[29] In his poem, the poetic self appears raptured and overwhelmed by the violent beauty of Niagara Falls, as we see him merge and flow with the torrents, falling altogether. Yet, this sublime union is abruptly disrupted by the fall, a moment the poetic voice experiences in awe,

> ¡[v]ed!, ¡llegan, saltan! El abismo horrendo
> devora los torrentes despeñados;
> crúzanse en él mil iris y asordados
> vuelven los bosques el fragor tremendo. (159-160)

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[29] For a study of the sublime in Heredia's poetry, see Ted E. McVay, Jr.'s "The Sublime Aesthetic in the Poetry of José María Heredia" (1994).

> [t]hey reach–they leap the barrier–the abyss
>
> Swallows insatiable the sinking waves.
>
> A thousand rainbows arch them, and woods
>
> Are deafened with the roar.]   (Heredia 132).[30]

Likewise, in Emerson's elaborations on language, poesis, and poetry as an organic, ever changing, expression that is to bridge culture and nature, we note the most sophisticated effort on poetic innovation. Although our group of poets, in one way or another, took (neo)classicism to different levels of romanticism, Heredia's and Emerson's works most consistently anticipated the romantic and modernist future.

The modern pastorals of our poets, invariably, coincide in engaging not only with ideals of the European Enlightenment and the processes of cultural and political emancipation in the Americas, but also with prophetic and civil(izing) notions of poetry. In so doing, their texts underscore poetry's prophetic and leading role in the (re)construction of the Americas, or its utopian function as understood by Ernst Bloch, that is, as an anticipatory act driven by hope that is "much more centrally turned towards the world: of overtaking the natural course of events" (Bloch 12). Whereas Emerson, Bello, Heredia, and Echeverría overtly committed to either the cultural or political emancipation of the Americas, (and most of them engaged in both), reviving the continent's utopian nature and poetry's utopian function, Chapman did the latter by endorsing a gradual emancipation for the slaves and the continuation of the imperial rule in his Bearded Arcadia. In spite of the fact that slavery is not a major theme in Heredia's

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[30] I use Heredia's self-translation of his poem "Niágara," published in *The Odes of Bello, Olmedo and Heredia* (1920).

poetry, and that his perspectives toward the use of violence to achieve emancipation changed throughout his life, the poet condemned the slave system and actively promoted freedom and independence for Cuba. As his poem "La Estrella de Cuba" (1823) ["The Star of Cuba"], which was written in Cuba during the time he participated in the pro-independence secret society "Los Caballeros Racionales" ["The Rational Knights"] or Logia Lautarina ["Lautaro's Lodge"],[31] eloquently states:

> [q]ue si un pueblo su dura cadena
> no se atreve a romper con sus manos
> bien les es fácil mudar de tiranos
> pero nunca ser libre podrá. (138)
>
> [i]f a people do not dare to break
> their hard chains with their own hands
> they might well change the tyrants
> but shall never be free.]

Heredia's combativeness and political activism resulted in his persecution by the Spanish government and his flight to the United States in 1823 to avoid prison. Though the emancipatory spirit of his incendiary lines only finds resonance in Echeverría's patriotic

[31] Two of several names adopted by the masonic related organization created by Francisco de Miranda in the late seventeenth century to promote the struggle for independence in Spanish America.

poetry, they will later reverberate and rise as faith and cult all over the Americas, especially in José Martí's writings.

As Alfonso Reyes observed, the seeds of utopian thought that were dormant in the American soil since the age of discovery germinated during the processes of emancipation (60), contributing to the emancipatory ethos that provided the New World, once again, with the possibility to make itself anew. In contrast to Emerson, Bello, Echeverría, and Heredia, who considered and advocated for emancipation as an inalienable right and condition to modernize and re-found the Americas, Chapman foreshadowed it as the cause of the demise of Barbadian plantocracy and the British empire. The utopian function of Heredia's pastoral not only can be noted in his famous poems "Al Popocatépetl" (1820) ["To Popocatépetl"] and "En el Teocalli de Cholula" (1820) ["On the Teocalli of Cholula"], but also in his poem "Al Sol" (1821-1825) ["To the Sun"]. In this regard, María C. Albin, drawing from Julio E. Miranda's approach to Andrés Bello's silvas, considers Heredia's poems as foundational texts where the poet "inscribe la utopía agraria que propugna para las nuevas repúblicas," combining the history and myths informed by "los escritos de Humboldt, las crónicas de la conquista de México, y el Génesis bíblico" (89; "inscribes the agrarian utopia that he proposes for the new republics; "the writings of Humboldt, the chronicles of the conquest of Mexico, and the biblical Genesis"). This too can be seen in his sylvan poem "Al Sol," where the poetic voice goes back to the biblical Genesis and pre-Columbian times to create an Arcadian utopia in which the Cuban nation can be prefigured.

As it was in the beginning, when God "[d]ijo: *¡[e]nciéndase el Sol!* y te encendiste / y brotaste la luz que en raudo vuelo / pobló los campos del desierto cielo," Heredia conjures the birth of his utopian island (108; "said: [*l*]*et the Sun shine*! And you shone / and sprang up the light / that in a swift flight peopled the fields of the empty sky"). Extolling the sun's generative power, since "[a]sí en los campos de la antigua Persia /resplandeció tu altar; así en el Cuzco / los Incas y su pueblo te acataban," he appoints himself as the overseer of his Cuban fatherland (109; "thus in the fields of ancient Persia / your shrine glowed; as in Cuzco / the Incas and their people obeyed you"). As the poetic voice states, "¡[m]i Patria…! ¡Oh Sol! Mi suspirada Cuba /¿a quién debe su gloria / a quién su eterna virginal belleza?" (107; "My Fatherland…! Oh Sun! My beloved Cuba / to whom does she own her glory / and her eternal virginal beauty?"). In effect, the sun nurtures the island with its love and covers it with coconut trees, palms, "y naranjos preciosos cuya pompa / nunca destroza el inclemente hielo," as well as with beams that "maduran las más dulces plantas" and make flowers bloom (107; "and beautiful orange trees whose vanity / is never destroyed by the ruthless ice"; "ripen the sweetest plants"). Although "a veces también por nuestras cumbres / truena la tempestad," the sun pacifies the clouds and to the earth "llega a dar esperanza" (107; "sometimes in our peaks / the tempest thunders"; "comes to give hope"). Thus, Heredia's pastoral stages his hopes for emancipation in Cuba, creating a utopian island whence to imagine and prefigure notions of nation and cultural identity.

HOPE, IMAGINATION, AND EMANCIPATION IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF FUTURITY

Hope for Ernst Bloch, as Beatriz Pastor stresses in her study of utopian thought in Latin America since the early colonial period through the seventeenth century, “no se reduce a la expresión de sueños de deseo ni aparece restringida al campo de lo imaginario” (34; “neither limits itself to the expression of dreams of desire nor appears to be restricted to the field of the imaginary”). Rather, hope operates in cognitive processes propelling the formation of the “anticipatory consciousness,” and thus turns itself into “una vertiente de un proceso más amplio de conocimiento y de transformación de la realidad” (35-36; “an aspect of a broader process of knowledge and transformation of reality”). While all the poets examined here enact beginnings and foreshadow aspirations that aim to have an impact in reality, Chapman’s imperial pastoral interrogates the universality of a notion of utopia generally conceived as “dreams of a better life” (Ruth Levitas qtd. in Beauchesne and Santos 5). In this regard, Levitas argues that to deal with this complex issue “we may claim that all utopias have something in common without making claims about the universality of utopia or the existence of a fundamental utopian propensity” (Ibid). Indeed, the modern pastorals we have studied coincide in that they perform a utopian function in which hope and emancipation appear inextricably linked, and playing a crucial role in bridging the poets’ re-cognitions of the Americas, their aspirations, anticipations, and imaginations of a realizable future. However, in Chapman’s bearded Arcadia hope and emancipation drive the poet’s dreaming of “a better life” backwards rather than forwards, that is to say, his dreaming forward, which is characteristic of utopian thought, prefigures emancipation as a dystopia for the imperial

establishment. In so doing, his pastoral marks a fundamental difference from the political and ideological functions we observe in the other poets' pastorals or with their engagement with the undergoing currents of socio-historical transformations that were impelling the re-foundation of the Americas. This in turn suggests that though texts might present commonalities regarding the expression of conventions of utopian thought, their utopian import or the manifestation of a utopian will geared toward "a better life" will be ultimately determined through a correlation between the utopian function of text and the kind of transformation in reality that it aims to bring about.

As America epitomizes, utopias are often grounded on territories that were occupied and owned by someone else. Excluding Emerson, who, in the works examined here, subtly suggests the problem of land property when he acknowledges that though the fields he sees as the property of Miller, Locke, and Manning "none of them owns the landscape," all poets, whether directly or not, engaged in their pastorals with the "Indian question" (Emerson 1: 8). "En el Teocalli de Cholula," for example, Heredia condemned the violence of the Aztecs in the same temple that enshrined and bore witness to "la superstición más inhumana," relegating them to a barbarian past that is to be suppressed in the civilized present (83; "the most inhumane superstition"). Our poets used different tropes that inevitably reinforced Eurocentric notions of civilization and the assimilation of the Indigenous peoples' or of the Afro-Caribbean peoples' cultural difference into national or imperial rhetorics and imaginaries through myths and mystifications. Nevertheless, the contentious nature of the Desert in "La Cautiva" evinces the question of the land as irreducible. Unlike Juan Manuel de Rosas, Echeverría declines to cultivate the

Pampa through direct violence, questioning the utopian origin and nature of the Americas by unveiling its contradictions, refusing to harmonize them, and highlighting democracy as necessary to achieve freedom.

Attending to Bloch's ideas about "el carácter dinámico y el carácter heterogéneo del fenómeno utópico," (37; "the dynamic and heterogeneous character of the utopian phenomenon"), Beatriz Pastor argues that utopian thought in colonial Latin America

> [n]o puede definirse en términos de *forma* porque adopta formas múltiples según la función que se le asigna en cada contexto particular … estas formas o manifestaciones diferentes del pensamiento utópico se integran dentro de un proceso más amplio y diverso en el que convergen la necesidad de conocer la nueva realidad con la de redefinir la propia identidad frente a ella. (38)
>
> [c]annot be defined in terms of *form* because it adopts multiple forms according to the function that is assigned to it in every particular context … these forms or different manifestations of the utopian thought are integrated into a wider and more diverse process in which the need to know the new reality and to redefine identity in relation to reality converge.]

Pastor's arguments continue to apply to expressions of utopian thought in inter-American poetic discourse produced during the first half of the nineteenth century. However, it is worth noting that form and function also appear to concur in pastoral genres and modes at this juncture. The poets' use, adaptations, and combinations of European forms and aesthetics tend to crystallize in liminal poetics and distinctive pastorals that, with the exception of Chapman's and the specific functions performed by the texts in their respective contexts, unfailingly channel a process of re-cognition and redirection of their realities that highlights their desires and will for the cultural and political emancipation in the Americas, reanimating and modernizing utopian thought.

Whereas all the poets we have re-visioned merged neoclassicism and romanticism in their poetics, the aesthetic, formal, and political quests we more notably observe in Emerson's, Bello's, and Echeverría's works reveal a rejection of servile imitation or imitation per se, as well as a notion of American modern poetry as a national and global expression. These poets proposed neither a rupture with the European cultural legacy nor a dependency on it. Rather, they explored ways to make the past usable by calling for a critical use of the past, and the *ars combinatoria* as means to fuse the cultural and historical legacy of Europe and to orient poesis toward the production of original thought, in this way, leading to the cultural and intellectual emancipation of America. As Bello (re)asserted the urgency of this task in his essay "Modo de estudiar la historia" (1848) ["Way to Study History"],

> [n]uestra civilización será también juzgada por sus obras; i si se la ve copiar servilmente a la europea aun en lo que ésta no tiene de aplicable, ¿cuál será el juicio que formará de nosotros un Michelet, un Guizot? Dirán: la América no ha sacudido aun sus cadenas; se arrastra sobre nuestras huellas con los ojos vendados; no respira en sus obras un pensamiento propio, nada orijinal, nada característico; remeda las formas de nuestra filosofía, i no se apropia de su espíritu. (125)
>
> [o]ur civilization will be also judged by its works; and if it is seen submissively imitating the European civilization even in that which is not applicable from it, what will be the judgment a Michelet or a Guizot will make of us? They will say: America has not shed off its chains, it crawls upon our footprints with its eyes covered; its works do not express its own thought, nothing original, nothing distinctive; it mocks the forms of our philosophy, and it does not appropriate of its spirit.]

Servile imitation, then, was reproachable not only because it was going to be judged by History's eyes, but also, and more significantly, because it hindered creation and favored uncritical imitation, leading toward the reproduction of that which was not even suitable for the American context. Cultural and political independence as well as democratization,

as Echeverría stressed, thus remained contingent upon the appropriation of America's spirit or the development of the ability to create and produce its own thought, knowledge, and poetic expression.

In the works of Bello, Heredia, Emerson, and Echeverría we find poetic images that produced origins and sparks that by re-imagining and reviving the Americas as future and poesis, re-opened the doors of the future and gave gravity to the possible and the nonexistent. Although their foundational images do not represent Lezamian images, that is, oblique images that participate in history by redirecting the prevailing "causalidad de sentido," they nonetheless led "al posible y por el posible a la gravitación de lo inexistente" (Lezama Lima, *La expresión americana* 49; "La dignidad de la poesía" 52; "directional causality"; "to the possible and by the possible to the gravity of the nonexistent"). These poets conveyed expressions of decolonizing thinking and "toques ligeros de invisibles causalidades" without which the American modernist poets would have probably been unable to unhinge the doors of the future and of "el mundo de la *poesis*" from their jambs, or to explore and inhabit the space where "la sustancia de lo inexistente" becomes possible or gravitates toward existence, a magic passage from the unreal or impossible to the possible real ("La dignidad de la poesía," 55, 52; "subtle touches of invisible causalities"; "the world of *poesis*"; "the substance of the nonexistent"). The beginnings and "subtle touches" that Bello, Heredia, Emerson and Echeverría brought into existence contributed to build the bedrock of modern inter-American poetic discourse and to ignite the fire of freedom and poesis in the hemisphere.

As their works make apparent, the liberal ideals of the Enlightenment played a central role in the struggle for emancipation and independence in America and in the

formation of its nation-states. Yet, they also show the poets' awareness of political independence as being insufficient to fulfill "freedom, equality, and fraternity," and thus their insistence on achieving cultural and intellectual independence and democracy as requirements to make them come into full realization. The utopian prefiguration of that which they, according to their "geo-political … [and] body-political epistemic location in the structures of colonial power/knowledge," envisioned as "a better life" in their modern pastorals exposes an intrinsic relation between hope and emancipation in the struggle for future and transformation (Ramón Grosfoguel 5). America continues to be a utopia, yet one that is grounded upon future and poesis, and that rejects the European characterization of itself as *natura naturata*. Its re-cognition and resignification as *natura naturans* or as the process and the result of continuous action and metamorphosis projected into the future change as its driving force. Hence, in the following chapters we shall examine ways in which American modernist poets re-cognized the "subtle touches of invisible causalities" produced by their predecessors, articulating Lezamian images that address manifold intersections of freedom in democracy, and in poesis.

Chapter II

Unhinging the Doors of the Future from Their Jambs: Emily Dickinson, José Martí, Walt Whitman, and Rubén Darío in the Making of American Modernisms

Nineteenth-Century American Modernities in the Struggle for Full Emancipation

American modernities began to configure themselves through dynamics of engagement and resistance to "the coloniality of power,"[32] and complex interactions between local and global cultural, economic, and political power relations that reveal a mutual –though asymmetrical– impact that has resulted in uneven development and hybrid modernities that, more often than not, do not conform to linear or evolutionary notions of progress. Whether we consider modernity in the Americas as starting with the European colonization or not, the late eighteenth century represents a juncture that marks the rise of Western Europe as a global hegemon, and the beginning of a process of modernization and continuous restructurings of the modern world-system that is still ongoing. Gayatri Spivak examines the historic crystallization of this turning-point by regarding the European Enlightenment as metonymized by the Peace of Westphalia (1648) and Kant's call for "cosmopolitheia, a constitution for world governance," in his *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch* (1795) (12). In so doing, she argues that while the former "announces the distant possibility of a Europartial, nation-state-specific globality," Kant's essay reacts to "what might be considered as a follow-through from the Peace of Westphalia: the Treaty of Basel (1795)," (which placed France as a prominent

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[32] Aníbal Quijano's notion of "coloniality of power" is explained in the Introduction of this dissertation.

European power), recognizing capital "as the great equalizer, and propos[ing] an implicitly master countries' world governance –since no other method of establishing equality is proposed– predicated upon a containment as well as a permission to warfare" (12,13). Indeed, the European Enlightenment not only prefigured a reorganization of the modern world-system in which Western Europe emerged as a global leading power by the late eighteenth century, but also modernized the "civilizing" mission as one driven by the precepts of liberalism and modern capitalism. Along this line, this chapter follows currents of the decolonizing thinking produced during the first half of the nineteenth-century by tracing Lezamian images that render visible contradictions between freedom and democracy in national and transnational contexts. Through the analysis of these poetic images "participando en la historia," I examine how Emily Dickinson, José Martí, Walt Whitman, and Rubén Darío introjected and symbolically archived in discourse and cultural memory interrogations and deflections aimed at the modernities they experienced, modernities whose issues still remain at stake in our twenty-first century (Lezama Lima 49; "participating in history").

As seen in the previous chapter, Esteban Echeverría stood out among the poets we studied for highlighting the need to fulfill democracy in America as a requirement for achieving its full emancipation. Hence, we will briefly examine relevant aspects of his *Dogma Socialista* (1846) [*Socialist Dogma*] so as to have a sense of the nature of the debates about democracy that were ongoing in the Americas by the end of the 1850s. In this programmatic text, Echeverría addressed the main principles of the project of national regeneration proposed by the young intellectuals grouped in the Asociación de Mayo (1837), discussing their ideas on democracy at length. Embracing "como lejítima

herencia las tradiciones progresivas de la Revolución de Mayo con miras a perfeccionarlas o complementarlas," these intellectuals embarked on a critical examination of nodal socio-political aspects of republican life, among which the question of people's sovereignty, suffrage, and representative democracy became central (Echeverría 16; "as legitimate heritage the traditions of progress of the Revolution of May with a view to perfect them or complement them"). From their perspective, democracy, "hija primojénita de Mayo," represented "un móvil, y un regulador, un principio y un fin, en todo y para todo … [y una] condición *sine qua non* del progreso normal de nuestro país" (21,72; "the eldest daughter of May"; "a motive, and a regulating mechanism, a beginning and an end, in everything and for everything … [and a] *sine qua non* of the normal progress of our country"). Thus, democracy as a force that acts circularly for itself and by itself is sent or launched as a legacy of May, as Jacques Derrida would put it, yet also simultaneously sent off or deferred to the future since its realization and, therefore, the progress of the country depended on the gradual achievement of "class equality" (Derrida 34; Echeverría 39). For Echeverría and his cohort, "class equality" or the possession and sovereign exercise of the individual, civil, and political freedom represented liberties that were to be consecrated by universal suffrage. In their view, whereas suffrage was the basis of every democratic system, universal suffrage signified the complete realization of democracy.

However, the law of universal suffrage passed by the Unitarian government in 1821[33] had exposed the colonial foundations upon which the republic was built, and how "el pueblo soberano no supo hacer uso de su libertad," letting power do as it pleased and creating a system of representatives of the economic and social ruling classes that resulted in "el suicidio del pueblo por sí mismo –la lejitimación del Despotismo" (22, 36; "the sovereign people did not know how to use their liberty"; "the suicide of the people by itself – the legitimation of Despotism"). This universal suffrage demonstrated not only that the people were unprepared or uneducated to exercise their sovereignty and freedom and, therefore, that the universal suffrage was inapplicable in the Argentine context, as he criticized the Unitarians for uncritically reproducing French social theories of the Restoration, but also that democracy is suicidal and can be perverted, leading democratically to its own destruction. With regard to the latter, Derrida argued that democracy's autoimmune condition stems from its constitutive coupling of equality and freedom. In doing so, he reminded us that democracy, since Plato and Aristotle, has always been related to "the question of calculation, of numerical calculation, of equality according to number … [and] according to value or worth (*kat'axian*)," as distinguished by Aristotle, and that "the democratic itself" does not have "a proper, stable, and univocal meaning" in Greek (29, 30, 32). Focusing on book 5 of Aristotle's *Politics*, Derrida noted that "the birth of the *demos* is related to a belief, an imagining, a presumption or presupposition" that supposes that "because they are alike (*homoios*) free, they believe, they think, they judge (*nomizousin*), they presume that they are equal absolutely" (48).

[33] The law of universal suffrage of Buenos Aires (or "Ley de Buenos Aires") granted the right to vote only to 20-year-old and older free men, and to younger free men if they were married.

The birth of the *demos* then is menacingly marked by the aporia between freedom and equality and the tension between equality according to number and worth or proportion (logos), yet also by the fact that equality is not always an opposing term "*beside, facing,* or *around*" freedom, since as long as everyone "is equally (*homoios*) free, equality becomes an integral part of freedom and is thus no longer calculable" (49). Consequently, democracy's autoimmune condition ultimately resides "in the free play of its indetermination" and in the incommensurability of equality in freedom (37). While Derrida assists us in understanding the interplay between equality and freedom and the aporias lying at the core of what we know as democracy, Echeverría's discussion shows some of these aporetic manifestations at work, providing a context to the debates about democracy in the Americas that underscores the processes of re-cognition, critical engagement and democratization undertaken by the intelligentsias of the new born republics at the turn of the first half of the nineteenth century. Considering democracy as principle, possibility, and institution of a freedom to-come, since democracy is to be fully realized through the possession and sovereign exercise of the individual, civil and political liberty, Echeverría brings forth crucial aspects of the question of democracy that were variously addressed by Emily Dickinson, José Martí, Walt Whitman, and Rubén Darío during the second half of the nineteenth century.

"ASSENT – AND YOU ARE SANE – / DEMUR – YOU'RE STRAIGHTWAY DANGEROUS –" [34]

After the 1850s, the struggle for emancipation and democracy in the Americas radicalized and intensified the contestation of myths and exclusions upon which the nation-states were grounded. As the works of our poets indicate, freedom invariably bridges them through issues of poesis. Yet, when freedom and democracy intertwine in national and transnational contexts, the private and public sphere, their views juxtapose and complement each other in ways that gain significant currency in our present. The U.S expansionist politics and ideology sanctioned with the Monroe Doctrine and metonymized in the credo of "Manifest Destiny," with its various rhetorical vindications "natural, God-given right, geographical predestination, virtuous industry, and the spread of democratic institutions," divided the Americas irrevocably (Susan Castillo 106). Expansionism in the Americas, however, not only operated transnationally through imperialist interventions and acts of annexation, but also intranationally with the appropriation of land and displacement of the American Indigenous peoples by the national states, we discussed in our previous chapter. Issues of political freedom, which involves citizenship and the sovereign exercise of individual freedom without interference or coercion, reveal democracy as a site of contention and negotiation where the national and transnational are inextricably and problematically interrelated. From a transnational perspective, political freedom appears threatened, perverted, and transgressed by the American nation-states through the territorial annexation of

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[34] Emily Dickinson's "Much madness is divinest sense," Fr620. All citations of Dickinson's poems refer to R.W. Franklin's *The Poems of Emily Dickinson: Variorum Edition* V. I-III (1998), unless otherwise indicated. The numbers following "Fr" correspond to the numeration Franklin gave to the poems.

Indigenous peoples' lands, as well as by European and U.S. imperialism, be it by direct military or political intervention and occupation or by economic neocolonization. Nationally, democracy is contested by the nation's *others* in their struggle for citizenship and civil rights, and by its citizens through issues of representativeness and participation which, as Henry David Thoreau discussed in his essay "Resistance to Civil Government," famously known as "Civil Disobedience" (1849), has both a national and transnational impact. As he argued,

> [t]he government itself, which is only the mode which the people have chosen to execute their will, is equally liable to be abused and perverted before the people can act through it. Witness the present Mexican war, the work of comparatively a few individuals using the standing government as their tool; for, in the outset, the people would not have consented to this measure. (145)

Unlike Thoreau, Emily Dickinson (1830-1886), as a disenfranchised subject by virtue of her gender, was excluded from the select universe that composed "the people," while we remember that the slaves and African descendants were not even considered as people. With their individual or civil liberty, or both, denied, the nation's *others* were actually forced to consent from the outset. In this regard, Susan Castillo, avoiding an analogy between the slaves' and the women's experience in the United States, on the one hand notes that the civil status of women and slaves coincided in the fact that neither of them "could vote, nor were they free agents in economic terms" (153). On the other hand, she highlights how the women's participation in the abolitionist movement made them increasingly aware "of the limitations of their own existence" (Ibid).

The "Declaration of Sentiments" emanated from the convention on women's rights held in Seneca Falls in 1848, among whose male delegates was the African American abolitionist leader and author Frederick Douglass, sets the tone and terms of

the women's struggle for individual and civil liberties in the years to follow. By conjuring the Declaration of Independence, the women's declaration not only proclaims "the 'self-evident' truth that all men and women are created equal, with the inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," as Castillo observes, but also symbolically resignifies the birth of the nation by establishing the equality between the sexes and adding the following facts:

> [t]he history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward women, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world:
> He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise.
> He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no voice.
> […]
> Having deprived her of this first right of a citizen, the elective franchise, thereby leaving her without representation in the halls of legislation, he has oppressed her on all sides.
> He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead.
> […] (158-159; "Declaration of Sentiments" qtd. in Castillo 159)

Thus felt and thought white middle and upper class women in antebellum United States. Though Dickinson did not take part directly in the women's movement, the critique of the status quo that pervades her writings joins a choir of past and contemporary female voices that demurred and confronted the constraints and legacy of patriarchal culture and domination by struggling for actual equality between the sexes and the fulfillment of individual and civil liberty in the United States and throughout the Americas.

While her work had been for a long time examined in isolation from her cultural and socio-historical context, scholarship produced in the last three decades has demonstrated that, despite her gradual withdrawal from public life, she actively

participated in an intellectual and literary community that extended beyond domestic and national boundaries. Her writing and understanding of nineteenth-century U.S. culture and society were nourished and mediated by her experience as a white middle-class woman, her family, close friends and epistolary exchanges, yet also by her keen engagement with the English and Anglo-American literary traditions, newspapers, and periodicals of the time.[35] The turn away from formalist and theological approaches to study her literary production has enabled its reexamination and re-cognition from perspectives that have brought to light its political import through issues of gender, language, her response to the Civil War (1861-1865), and democracy. Critics such as Coleman Hutchison, Betsy Erkkila, and Paul Crumbley have pointed out that the political participation of Dickinson's father in the Whig party and of her brother in the Amherst public sphere were likely to turn their home into a space where discussions about democracy, individual choice and popular consent, which were debated at the time, were part of the family's everyday life (Crumbley 2-4). This is to say neither that Dickinson sided with them in political terms, nor that she unknowingly ventriloquized their views, but rather to acknowledge that she inhabited a highly politicized space that contributed to foster her interest and insights about politics to the extent of making her express in a letter to Susan Gilbert in 1852 that she wanted to "be a Delegate to the great Whig Convention," since she knew "all about Daniel Webster, and the Tariff, and the Law" (Dickinson qtd. in Paul Crumbley 8).

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[35] For an overview of the main critical currents in Dickinson's scholarship since the late nineteenth century through the present see, Theo Davis's "Critical History I: 1890-1955," and Magdalena Zapedowska's "Critical History II: 1955 to the Present" in *Emily Dickinson in Context* (2013).

In spite of the fact that Dickinson never turned into a political activist, writing became the site where she engaged with politics. Critics have noted that one of the main difficulties readers face with Dickinson's work is that her "texts seem to both say and unsay; claim and disclaim; desire and decline; offer and retract; assert and deny; defend and attack; gain and lose; define and circumvent definition" (Shira Wolosky 17). Indeterminacy, multiplicity, contradiction, and dialogism are terms commonly found in reference to her writing and its resistance to totalizing characterizations. However, historical scholarship of her work also indicates that her texts offer consistent evidence that the poet "integrated the principle of choice into her own thought process as part of a deliberate political project directly related to democratic sovereignty and consent" (Paul Crumbley 17). According to Crumbley, the political and democratic dimensions of Dickinson's work lie in her efforts to resist conformity and complacency, highlighting the role of choice and free will as constitutive of individual sovereignty and freedom, as well as of the writing and reading process.[36] I agree with Crumbley's arguments. As his study demonstrates, in Dickinson's writings we can observe, on the one hand, an emphasis on choice and the sovereign exercise of individual freedom as a condition of a democratic individual and societal self, and a refusal to model political action that, however, suggests action as necessary to produce historical change. On the other hand, we have a reading

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[36] Paul Crumbley's insightful work *Winds of Will: Emily Dickinson and the Sovereignty of Democratic Thought* (2010) examines the poet's democratic politics by focusing on choice. Discussing the relationship between choice, sovereignty and consent in representational democracy, he observes that "[c]hoice then informs both sovereignty and consent as the exercise of will essential to sovereignty and the acceptance or rejection of representation essential to consent" (20).

process that requires the collaboration of readers in making their own interpretative choices for grasping her slant truths.

In examining expressions of decolonizing thinking related to freedom and democracy in Dickinson's poetry, I aim to contribute to current discussions of the poet' democratic thought by examining poems where dissent is the choice and an expression of the exercise of individual sovereignty and freedom that rejects women's exclusion in the public sphere and in political participation. The valentine "*Sic transit gloria mundi*" ["Thus passes the glory of the world"] (1852), one of her earliest, longest and few published poems,[37] illustrates the radicalism of her poetics, introducing us to her perspectives about democracy and female citizenship. Making coalesce the past, the present, the sacred, the secular, high and popular culture, the private and the public, the speaker categorically declares:

> [u]nto the Legislature
>
> My country bids me go,
>
> I'll take my *india rubbers*
>
> In case the wind should blow!" (Fr2)

The speaker dramatizes women's exclusion from political participation in the country and their exile, which appears to be enforced not only by the "legislature" that bids her to go,

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[37] Although Emily Dickinson wrote more than seventeen hundred poems, only ten were published during her lifetime. I use the anonymous version of the manuscript of "*Sic transit gloria mundi*" that was sent to William Howland and published in the *Springfield Daily Republican* in 1852. The major differences between the extant unpublished version of the poem and the latter are the italicization of words and the addition of punctuation and exclamation marks.

but also by history, as her recollection of the teachings provided by her education suggests:

> [i]t *was* the brave Columbus
> A sailing o'er the tide
> Who notified the nations
> Of where I would reside! (Ibid)

While the allusion to Columbus seems a whimsical reference to the kind of lessons she learned, a closer look quickly reveals its role in her "amusing medley," as her valentine was characterized in the preface that introduced its publication (Prefatory note qtd. in Franklin 53). Columbus represents by antonomasia the origin of America, pointing thus the speaker's return to the beginning of the New World, a place in which women were also confined to silence and exclusion. The latter, though time has passed, has not changed; its reenactment and perpetuation is depicted as follows,

> [o]ur Fathers being weary
> Laid down on Bunker Hill;
> and tho' full many a morning
> Yet they are sleeping still–" (Ibid).

Bunker Hill, as the location where the first major battle for independence was fought in 1775, metonymizes an origin for the U.S. nation, a republic founded upon its Fathers' slumber, or a place in which once again there was no place for women. Since "they are sleeping still," the speaker is forced to unwillingly leave her country, which she does, yet not without saying farewell with a distinct valentine.

By the second half of the nineteenth century printed greeting cards were popularized and extended the tradition of sending valentines in the United States and Canada. Peter Ward addresses the characteristics of the valentines in Canada by this time, noting that though valentines were vastly associated with romantic love, their meanings and audiences broadened with printing culture. In this way, valentines not only came to express "a wide range of sentiments," from friendship to romance, but they also used humor "to convey the same message, indirectly and therefore ambiguously," and "even pervert[ed] the custom and use of the form of the valentine to express converse emotion. Whatever the intent, valentines were a means of expressing interest in someone of the opposite sex and of attracting their interest in return" (Ward 98). Such transformations and uses can also be found in U.S. valentines, which became increasingly popular during the Civil War era. As Dickinson's poem illustrates, she follows some of the main conventions of the valentine and radically transgresses "the custom and the use of the form" by expanding, politicizing, and making public its meanings. This transgression is also noted by the person who the preface to the publication of her poem in the *Republican*, who stresses that "[t]he hand that wrote the following amusing medley to a gentleman friend of ours, as "a valentine," is capable of writing very fine things…" (qtd. in Franklin 1: 53). In addition to the approval of the anonymous poet's craft and the encouragement to keep a correspondence "more direct than this" with the *Republican*, the quotation marks in referring to her poem "as a valentine" ironically wink at her witty use and free version of the valentine. Likewise, the speaker in Dickinson's valentine can well be interpreted as a revolutionary martyr, who, like Saint Valentine of Rome,[38] endured

[38] Saint Valentine is often identified in Christian accounts as either a Roman martyr that

the injustice of the establishment without renouncing her beliefs, since though she is hopeful that "[t]he trumpet sir, shall wake them," she makes clear that "[a] coward will remain, Sir" (Fr2).

Banished like 'nobodies,' as Dickinson tells us in poem 260 "I'm nobody! Who are you?," yet also deliberately avoiding to be "public like a frog," she progressively withdrew from public life. Choosing not to conform to the status quo, as she manifested in her refusal to comply with conventional gender roles, as well as in her poem "Publication is the auction," where she rejects to reduce the "Human Spirit / To Disgrace of Price –," her choices represent acts of resistance and rebellion against exclusion, rather than of renunciation of her right to individual and civil freedom (Fr788). Dickinson "preferred not to" surrender to commodification and the constraints of literary tradition and declined to publish her works while she was alive, transforming the sovereign exercise of her individual freedom into genuine manifestations of civil disobedience, and of ethical and political integrity. Our poet foregrounded the question of democracy, of female citizenship and freedom, suggesting dissent and rebellion as constitutive of a democratic individual self and, consequently, of a democratic societal self. As we observe in the poem 353 (1862),

I'm ceded - I've stopped being their's

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refused to give up his Christian faith or as a priest that defied the reign of emperor Claudius II, the Goth, secretly marrying Christian couples and helping persecuted Christians, which led to his brutal execution circa 269 AD. Along this line, works by Shira Wolosky and Michelle Kohler indicate that in Dickinson's poems we can find both an embracing and rejection of notions of Christian martyrdom. See, Kholer's "Dickinson and the Poetics of Revolution" (2010), and Wolosky's *Emily Dickinson: A Voice of War* (1984).

The name They dropped opon my face

With water, in the country church

Is finished using, now,

And They can put it with my Dolls,

My childhood, and the string of spools,

I've finished threading - too - (Fr353)

What seems to be a surrender in the opening sentence of the first line is immediately disrupted by an unequivocal assertion of individual sovereignty and liberty in which dissent and rebellion are the speaker's choice. Merging the sacred and the secular, the public and the private, the speaker goes back to the moment of her baptism, a personal origin that involves identity and cultural constructions of female selfhood that, we are told, are "finished using, now." This coming of age not only reveals a revolt against patriarchal conventions of femininity, as the allusion to the dolls and sewing indicate, but also a recognition that "[b]aptized, before, without the choice" now, she is in full command to exercise her free will to choose (Ibid). As she goes on,

My second Rank – too small the first –

Crowned – Crowing – on my Father's breast –

A half unconscious Queen –

But this time – Adequate – Erect,

With Will to choose,

Or to reject,

And I choose, just a Crown –[39] (Fr353)

Evoking fairy tales, the "half unconscious Queen" finally wakes up "adequate" and "erect" to choose neither more nor less than "just a Crown –." Unlike Walt Whitman's notion of gender equality in democracy or "[t]he idea of women in America … developed, raised to become the robust equals, workers, and it may be even practical and political deciders with the men – greater than man we may admit, through their divine maternity," Dickinson's female subject rises upright to "give up toys and fictions" as he asks, yet, not to subject her body, subjectivity, and freedom to the nation and perform as patriotic breeders (*CPCP* 955).[40] Rather, she claims for an equality that balances the power relations between the sexes, as her demand for the Crown symbolizes.

Her poem thus becomes a Lezamian image, an image that participates in history by opening a hiatus in discourse and cultural memory with an "historic vision" that, on the one hand, summons all those female voices that in the past too manifested their rejection to the inequality between the sexes and patriarchal oppression by rebelling against it and "each carping tongue / who says my hand a needle better fits," as the poet

[39] Dickinson's use of monarchical terminology, as Crumbley points out, has been seen by some critics as "evidence that she is so entrenched in conservative middle-class values that her writing does not contemplate political alternatives" (25). While I do not overlook the poet's "body political epistemic location," as Ramón Grosfoguel reminds us, her engagement with monarchical or aristocratic terminology is more productively understood as correlative with the endurance of neoclassicism and the ongoing process of cultural and political decolonization and democratization that continued the second half of the nineteenth century in the Americas. As we know, not only was neoclassicism made anew via Parnassianism, but also romanticism through Symbolism. Rubén Darío engaged with both Parnassianism and Symbolism in his poetry using aristocratic language and symbols, which was long interpreted by critics as symptoms of his decadence and conservatism, leading in turn to the dismissal of his resignifications and aesthetic transgressions, and the depoliticization of his poetic production.

[40] All citations of Whitman's works are taken from *Complete Poetry and Collected Prose* (1982), unless otherwise indicated.

Anne Bradstreet did in the poem "Prologue" of her first volume published in 1650 (Bradstreet 239). On the other hand, it inscribes the speaker's exercise of her sovereign will to dissent from the "self-evident" constitutional "truths" that ignore the equality between the sexes, or between King and Queen, rendering visible women's denial of access to full citizenship and political participation in the construction of the republic. Crumbley compares Dickinson's approach to history with other U.S. contemporary women writers arguing that "she magnifies the role of epistemological reorientation, so that readers become aware of the fact that they are making choices for which they themselves must assume responsibility and for which the outcome is not at all certain" (Crumbley 96). As her poetic image illustrates, Dickinson contributes to an "epistemological reorientation" of freedom that not only stresses dissent and rebellion as expressions of the critical exercise of individual sovereignty, but also calls for gender equality and civil freedom as *sine qua non* for a truly representative democracy.

COMPETING NOTIONS OF DEMOCRACY IN THE AMERICAS

As *letrados* who engaged with writing through literature and journalism, Martí, Darío, and Whitman were citizens of national and cosmopolitan lettered cities.[41] Rama claimed that the *letrados* of Latin American lettered cities kept appearing in complicity

[41] In his influential and posthumous study *La ciudad letrada* (1984), Ángel Rama made a distinction between the "lettered" and the "real" city. He argued that whereas the "lettered city" results from colonization in Spanish America and the use of writing by the colonial administrations and their *letrados* as a fundamental tool in the implementation of the colonizing project, the "real city" relates to orality, understood as a transhistorical and transcultural system of signification that he associated with rural and marginalized cultures.

with the nation-states by the second half of the nineteenth century. While our poets prove to be no exception to this argument, they also took part in the dissidence that already existed within the lettered cities, and continued to produce a critical thought that Rama saw belatedly emerging by the end of the century (65). Martí, Darío, and Whitman inhabited the interstitial space Rama reserved for modernist poetry in his binary between "the lettered" and "the real" city. In this threshold, and when poets are not coopted by the power structures, we can see them

> […] ocupar los márgenes de la ciudad letrada y oscilar entre ella y la ciudad real, trabajando sobre lo que una y otra ofrecen, en un ejercicio ricamente ambiguo a la manera en que lo veía Paul Valéry 'hésitation prolongée entre le son et le sens.' Durante esa vacilación están combinando un mundo real, una experiencia vivida, una impregnación auténtica con un orden de significaciones y de ceremonias, una jerarquía, una función de Estado. Es la distancia que va de la tersura y el irónico temblor de '¿Recuerdas que querías ser una Margarita Gautier?' al estruendo del Canto a la Argentina. (80)
>
> […] explore the ragged margins of reality that lay outside the city of letters and linger there ambiguously in what Paul Valéry called a "prolonged hesitation between sound and sense," vacillating between authentic, lived experience and significations, ceremony, hierarchy and state power. ... [it is] the distance that separates the terse, ironic tremor of "Remember how you wished to be a Margarita Gautier?" from the bombast of *Canto a la Argentina*.] (John Charles Chasteen 73)

Rama's notion of "the real" city as an opposing and, yet, interdependent transcultural and transhistorical system of significations seems to disregard the fact that "the real" city is as artificial as "the lettered" city and therefore, that both as constructed cultural and discursive spaces are affected by "the coloniality of power." In these oscillations between the lettered and the real city or, as we argue, through the poets' engagement and critique to "the coloniality of power," we can observe not only how José Martí (1853-1895), Walt Whitman (1819-1892), and Rubén Darío (1867-1916) partook of the projects, ideologies,

epistemologies and discursive practices produced nationally and transnationally, but also how in that "prolonged hesitation between sound and sense" they re-visioned and interrogated them, producing Lezamian images or oblique poetic images that convey critical knowledges that show inflections and deflections from hegemonic ideas related to freedom and democracy.[42]

As a radical thinker and revolutionary activist who helped organize the Cuban War of Independence from Spain while living as a political exile in New York, when the annexation of Cuba was being discussed in the U.S. congress, José Martí had a lucid understanding of the reconfigurations of the modern world-system by the late nineteenth century. His famous anti-imperialist manifesto "Nuestra América" (1891) ["Our America"] stages this juncture as "la hora del recuento, y de la marcha unida" in which "¡los árboles se han de poner en fila, para que no pase el gigante de las siete leguas!" (2: 106; "the hour of reckoning and of marching in unison"; "[t]he trees must form ranks to block the seven-league giant!"; Esther Allen 289). A time not only to reckon allies, unite, and close ranks to defend "our America" from U.S. imperialist expansionism, but also to re-cognize and recount the history of the American republics. He therefore re-visions their origins and trajectory, acknowledging that "[l]a colonia continuó viviendo en la república (2: 109; "[t]he colony lives on in the republic"; 293). In his view, "the coloniality of power" inherited from colonialism along with imitation and the lack of knowledge of local reality represented the main obstacles to the advent of "el gobierno lógico" in America (2: 109; "a logical form of government"; 292). They were the root

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[42] A discussion of what, by drawing from José Lezama Lima's notion of poetic image, I call Lezamian images in this dissertation is provided in the Introduction.

causes of the exclusion of the "ignorantes" who had helped the republics "a redimirse, en un gobierno que tenía por base la razón; la razón de todos en las cosas de todos, y no la razón universal de uno sobre la razón de otros" (ibid; "ignorant masses;" "redeem [themselves] – upon a government based on reason, the reason of all directed toward the things that are of concern to all, and not the university-taught reason of the few imposed upon the rustic reason of others"; 292). In this way, "Our America" failed to pair "la vincha y la toga; en desestancar al indio; en ir haciendo lado al negro suficiente; en ajustar la libertad al cuerpo de los que se alzaron y vencieron por ella," or to democratize its political systems, societies and cultures, imposing in turn "the reason of the strongest" and denying the right to exercise reason and participate in the construction of the republics to its *others* (2: 110; "the Indian headband and the judicial robe, to undam the Indian, make a place for the able black, and tailor liberty to the bodies of those who rose up and triumphed in its name"; 292).

While the process of democratization of the American republics unfolded through diverse aporetic manifestations in which equality remained an opposing term "*beside, facing,* or *around*" freedom during the second half of the nineteenth century, from a transnational perspective, imperialism and its democracy exposed the tensions and transgressions resulting from the aporia between equality and freedom in a context where equality, among independent states, had already become "an integral part of freedom" and so, incommensurable (Derrida 49). Discussing Alexis de Tocqueville's and José Martí's perspectives on U.S democracy, Donald Pease argues that whereas the former

"masked the colonial histories of France and the United States,"[43] Martí "drove a wedge between imperial will to annex and democratic aspirations to liberty, solidarity and social justice," bringing to light that the "U.S. imperial policies did not constitute exceptions to feudalism, as Tocqueville had maintained, but instead derived their legitimacy from that tradition" (Pease 39, 40, 45). Indeed, Martí revived and updated the Americanist project of emancipation by contending not only that U.S. freedom was feudal and "más de la localidad que de la humanidad, una libertad que bambolea, egoísta e injusta, sobre los hombros de una raza esclava," but also that imperial democracy and neocolonialism, either by annexation or through cultural and economic hegemony, jeopardized the political freedom and sovereignty of the American nations, as well as their slow and yet sustained and promising progress (2: 98; "more a matter of location than of human weakness, a selfish and unjust freedom teetering upon the shoulders of an enslaved race"; Randall et al. 74). As Pease rightly observes, Martí made no distinction between the European colonialism and the U.S. neocolonialism. However, he identified "the seven-league giant's" expansionism and democracy as the major threat in the Americas, opposing, thus, both Tocqueville's and Whitman's American democracy.

[43] Following Jacques Ranciere's views on Tocqueville's "imperial designs on a U.S. national polity," Pease states that his masterwork produces a mirror image of France's own self-alienated democracy that reducing "the heterogeneous elements of U.S. culture to sociopolitical dimensions answerable to France's urgent contemporary needs … effectively incorporated America within the empire of French memory, as an additional unit of wealth in his symbolic patrimony and as an informal possession within France's cultural empire" (36). This operation of ideological and symbolic appropriation between France and the United States, however, was shortly after adapted and mirrored by the U.S., as Rubén Darío chronicled in "La invasión de los bárbaros del norte" (1901). There, he documents the cultural and economic "invasion" of the United States in France, indicating the advance and success of their imperial enterprise as a historic turn that replaced the "Gesta Dei per Francos" (God's Work Through the Franks) for the "*¡Gesta dei per yankees!*" (124).

As "Emerson" (1882) and "El poeta Walt Whitman" (1887) make manifest, the critical essays that boosted the fervent reception of the U.S. poets in the Spanish American lettered cities,[44] Martí admired the fire of freedom that enlivened their works. From his perspective, Emerson "no conoció límites ni trabas. Ni fué hombre de su pueblo, porque lo fue del pueblo humano. Vió la tierra, la halló inconforme a sí, sintió el dolor de responder las preguntas que los hombres no hacen, y se plegó en sí" (1: 1054; "[h]e knew not limitations, no shackles. He was not a man of his nation; he was a man of the human nation. He saw the earth, found it out of step with himself, felt the melancholy of answering questions that men do not ask, and withdrew into himself"; Allen 119). In Emerson, Martí found a philosopher and a poet to whom Nature had revealed itself. He was a master and a prophet that passed on Nature's teachings in his poetry and poetic prose, which he praised and honored as follows "[t]oda su prosa es verso. Y su verso y su prosa son como ecos … [p]ara ser bueno no necesita más que ver lo bello. A esas llamas, escribe. Caen sus ideas en la mente como piedrecillas blancas en mar luminoso: ¡qué chispazos! ¡qué relámpageos! ¡qué venas de fuego! Y se siente vértigo, como si se viajara en el lomo de un león volador" (1: 1053, 1056; "[a]ll of his poetry was poetry, and his poetry and prose are like echoes … [t]o be good, he needs only to see beauty. Those are the flames by whose light he writes. His ideas fall into the mind like small white pebbles

[44] José Ballón Aguirre argues that Emerson's works were enthusiastically received in South America and Cuba long before Martí arrived at New York in 1880 and so, that he became familiar with the poet during his youth in Cuba. In this regard, it is worth noting that among the Cuban critics of Emerson he discusses, Néstor Ponce de León's (1837-1899) comments on the poet stand out, as we observe that some of the metaphors and ideas he used will later reverberate in Martí's writings. See, "V. El poeta revolucionario moderno: José Martí (de la *imago mundi* al campo de batalla)" (277-400) in *Martí y Darío ante América y Europa: Textos y contextos contrarios*.

on a luminous sea: what sparks! what flashes! what veins of fire! There is a sense of vertigo, as if we were riding on the back of a lion in flight"; 118,122).

Likewise, and highlighting that "[c]ada estado social trae su expresión a la literatura, de tal modo, que por las diversas fases de ella pudiera contarse la historia de los pueblos, con más verdad que por sus cronicones y sus décadas," Martí acknowledged in Whitman's poetry a genuine expression of his time, and the voice of a fellow child of fire who also revived the hope and struggle for emancipation in the Americas by heralding freedom as "la religión definitiva. Y la poesía de la libertad el culto nuevo" (1: 1137, 1138; "[e]very society brings to literature its own form of expression, and the history of the nations can be told with greater truth by the stages of literature than by chronicles and decades"; "the definitive religion, and the poetry of liberty the new form of worship"; Allen 186, 187). "Oid lo que canta este pueblo trabajador y satisfecho; oid a Walt Whitman" claimed Martí, encouraging his readers to study him "porque si no es el poeta de mejor gusto, es el más intrépido, abarcador y desembarazado de su tiempo" (1: 1138, 1135; "[l]isten to the song of this hard working and satisfied nation; listen to Walt Whitman"; "though he is not always in the best taste, he is the most audacious, all-encompassing, and unencumbered poet of his time"; 187, 184).

Martí's omission of Emerson's and Whitman's imperialism and exceptionalism reminds us that literary works are neither immune to hegemonic ideologies and discursive practices, nor can they be disassociated from the cultural and historical contexts in which they were produced.[45] His "discretion" enables us to observe the interplay between his

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[45] For studies that address Martí's ideological and political contradictions see, Jorge Camacho's "José Martí y Rubén Darío ante la anexión de territorios indígenas en

agency and the agency of the discourses out of which his readings of these poets emerge, as George B. Handley suggests in his discussion of Whitman and Martí (537). An interaction that results in a translation of Emerson and Whitman that foregrounds the terms upon which Martí establishes a kinship and a dialogue with them, which, deliberately or not, eclipses their contradictions and mythifies their figures. Martí and Whitman not only ardently believed in freedom and creation as means to achieve cultural and political emancipation in the New World, but also concurred on that "imaginative literature, especially poetry, the stock of all," as Whitman stated, had to play a vital role in the democratization of culture and society and in the teaching of moral and ethical values (934). Our poet-prophets were aware that "[t]rincheras de ideas valen más que trincheras de piedra," and so they actively engaged in the public debates about democracy, endowing it with a "causalidad de sentido" or with meanings, sensibility, and direction according to the kind of freedom they envisioned (2: 105; "[t]renches of ideas are worth more than trenches of stone"; Allen 288; Lezama Lima 49; "directional causality"). Despite the convergences we can find between their notions of freedom, Whitman's keen endorsement of imperialist discourses and ideologies endowed his "New World democracy" with a directionality that endangered the process of democratization and emancipation in the hemisphere (938).

In *Democratic Vistas* (1871), Whitman outlined the "American programme" of democracy by building it upon three main aspects or stages (977). While the first one

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Argentina y Nicaragua" (2012) and "Contra el peligro: José Martí, la crítica modernista y la justificación de las políticas liberales en el siglo XIX" (2009), Alfred J. López's "Translating Interdisciplinarity: Reading Martí Reading Whitman" (2011), and George B. Handley's "On Reading South in the New World: Whitman, Martí, Glissant, and the Hegelian Dialectic" (2003).

referred to “the planning and putting on record the political foundations rights of immense masses of people –indeed all people –” in the arrangement of the political organization of the republic, the second stage corresponded with “material prosperity,” “riches, and the getting of riches, and the amplest products, power, activity, inventions” (976, 951, 977). Therefore, the third aspect, resulting from the previous two, invoked the birth of a democratic literary expression which was to be instrumental in reconciling the emerging contradictions in the process of democratization (977). Though Whitman openly criticized and cautioned about the dangers and consequences of the feudal and growing “materialistic character” of U.S. culture and society, “material prosperity” configured his dialectic, and so he also acknowledged that “the extreme business energy, and this almost maniacal appetite for wealth prevalent in the United States are parts of amelioration and progress, indispensably needed to prepare the very results I demand” (951). From his perspective, the “mighty” nineteenth century represented an age of modernization of Western civilization, and a world-stage where an old “colossal drama” was being reenacted; a dramatic piece in which the United States were “unquestionably designated for the leading parts, for many a century to come. In them history and humanity seem to seek to culminate” (1001).

Like Emerson, Whitman was also influenced by German idealism; however, as his echoes of Hegel’s teleology and dialectic indicate, the philosopher’s “invaluable contributions” were not only useful to position his nation at the center of modernity and History, but they also became a cornerstone in his experiment of democracy (985). Drawing from local and metropolitan formulas, Whitman saw the United States “outvying the Antique, beyond Alexander’s, beyond the sway of Rome,” a superior

nation for which "[s]ubjection, aggregation" like that endured by ancient Greece was "impossible," justifying them, however, in the hemisphere under the banner of democracy (938, 935). As the poet made explicit, he used "the words America and democracy as convertible terms," bringing them into play through a notion of nationality that was to "be fully coherent, grand and free, through the cohesion, grandeur and freedom of the common aggregate, the Union" (930, 1050). This "common aggregate" was to rely on "the idea and fact of AMERICAN TOTALITY, and with what is meant by the Flag, the stars and stripes," as well as on "the sacred principle of the Union, the right of ensemble, at whatever sacrifice – and yet another, an equally sacred principle, the right of each State, consider'd as a separate sovereign individual, in its own sphere," which he identified as constitutive paradoxes of the nation or of democracy that, despite their complexities, could not be abdicated (1050,1051). Whereas he thought that the right of aggregation that was to enable the merging of all individualities "at whatever sacrifice" into one ever-expanding national identity or personality and the right of individual sovereignty of the States could be harmoniously adjusted, "the existence of the true American continental solidarity of the future" was to entirely depend on "a compacted imperial ensemble" (1050).

Whitman's rehearsal of the Virgilian maxim *e pluribus unum* (Out of Many One) certainly aimed "to consolidate the multiple into the unitary, or the heterogeneous "multi-versal" plurality of peoples it conquered into the hegemonic "universal" of its imperial rule," which was what the Roman Empire did, as Djelal Kadir argues (6).[46] His all-

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[46] Discussing the trajectory of *e pluribus unum* in the Americas, Kadir observes that Virgil's term, "[d]espite its intended deployment as declarative of unity and harmonious

encompassing *unum*, as D. H. Lawrence early pointed out in his discussion of *Leaves of Grass*, completely dismissed that "in merging you must merge away from something, as well as toward something, and in sympathy you must depart from one point to arrive at another," proposing thus a unidirectional amalgamation that becomes "a hideous tyranny once he has attained his goal of Allness. His one identity is a prison of horror once realized" (Lawrence 826). Whitman's imperial national identity or individuality not only obscures the dislocations of those identities that are subsumed into his "common aggregate," transgressing in turn their individual sovereignty under the guise of unity and sympathy, but also denies difference, transforming it into sameness. As David Simpson argues, supplementing Lawrence's objections to Whitman's merging and deceptive sympathy, the poet's omnivorous "appetite for identity" failed "to recognize the empirical facts of ethnic, social, political, occupational, and sexual differences within the American society whose features he was celebrating," harmonizing and mystifying their conflictive relations in turn (177).

If Dickinson reminds us how "the Union" neither allowed nor adjusted the freedom of its aggregates, Martí and Darío expose how Whitman's *e pluribus unum* endangered the freedom of other American nations by championing freedom as a privilege of the strongest nation. His "American programme" of democracy, his outspoken advocacy for the annexation of Canada and Cuba, his hopes to possess the continent "[t]he Pacific will be ours, and the Atlantic mainly ours," and his imperialist

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blending," has been a problematic marker for "incommensurability between ethnic identity and nation … [and a] talisman for the fraught processes of imperial expansion and conflictive myths of integration" since the European colonization through the present (5).

assumption that "[t]he individuality of one nation must then, as always, lead the world" allegedly furthered unlimited expansionism and cultural and economic hegemony as legitimate means to fulfill democracy and the "unquestionable" "Manifest Destiny" of his nation to take "the leading parts," and become the world's leading imperial nation (981). Staying in his imperial tower, Whitman disavowed other nations and peoples in processes of emancipation as equals and therefore, as equally free and eligible to decide their own future, or as equally eligible to be free and do so, if they were not yet free. In doing so, he turned a blind eye to the freedom, sovereignty, and the right to self-determination of his American neighbors, proving his democracy to be akin with what Martí argued was the freedom purveyed by the U.S., that is to say, with a notion of freedom, "que es aspiración universal y perenne del hombre," as the right of "the fittest" or of the most technologically advanced nations (2: 136; "the perennial and universal hope of mankind"; Randall et al. 351).

Martí understood and anticipated the consequences of the democracy furthered by Whitman's America and its "ambición de pueblo universal, como la garantía indispensable de su poder futuro" (2: 131; "universal ambition, by a need for guarantees essential to its future"; Randall et al. 344). His articles about the First International Conference of American States held in Washington in 1889 and 1890, also known as the First Pan-American Conference,[47] turned into a "collection of memoranda," to borrow

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[47] Probably distinguishing between Simón Bolívar's Pan-Americanism and the U.S. Pan-Americanism, Martí refused to call this conference as the First Pan-American Conference in his writings by referring to it as the Congress of Washington. Whereas Bolívar's efforts to unify the continent in the Congress of Panama (1826) historically represents the first hemispheric conference, to which the United States and Brazil were also invited, though the latter, then a monarchy, refused to participate and none of the two U.S.

Whitman's characterization of his *Democratic Vistas*, that admonished the Spanish American nations about the U.S. imperialist designs and prefigured its outcomes (930). Hence, his texts, on the one hand, recall the U.S. economic, political and territorial interventions in Panama, Mexico, Nicaragua, Santo Domingo, Haiti, Cuba and Colombia. On the other hand, they caution that the U.S. Pan-Americanism was an update of the Monroe Doctrine that sought to expand their dominions through the creation of a league destined to secure a market for their products that would control the free trade of the American nations with Europe, ultimately leading them to abdicate their sovereignty (2: 130, 136).[48] The complex state of affairs in the hemisphere demanded a response from intellectuals and politicians that for Martí was unequivocal: "[l]a simpatía por los pueblos libres dura hasta que hacen traición a la libertad; o ponen en riesgo la de nuestra patria," tracing, thus, a divisive line between those nations that defended freedom and favored a peaceful coexistence in the world, and those whose violence and ambition sabotaged

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delegates attended because one of them arrived too late and the other died during the trip (Markus Heide 94), Martí made clear that "el Congreso que llaman aquí de Pan-América" promoted a different notion of Pan-Americanism, as Haiti and Santo Domingo demonstrated by declining to participate due to the U.S. pressures upon these countries to cede them dominions in the peninsula of San Nicolás and the bay of Samaná (2: 118; "the Congress they call here as Pan-American").

[48] As Martí foreshadowed and history has demonstrated, the early interventions of the United States in the Americas anticipated the terms upon which the North-South relations were to unfold in the future. Just to have an idea, since to analyze the consequences that the U.S. aggressions and interventions have had up today in the continent is not the object of this study, Sophia McClennen points out in her article "E Pluribus Unum, Ex Uno Plura: Legislating and Deregulating American Studies Post- 9/11" (2008) that "the United States invaded or intervened in the politics of Latin America on 85 separate occasions from 1846 to 1996" (168). An outrageous and criminal figure that, as history records, not only has continued to increase, but also does not account for the interventions in the rest of the planet.

freedom and jeopardized that of other nations (2: 132; “[g]ood will toward free nations endures until they betray freedom and endanger that of our country”; 344).

As Martí’s concerns reveal, he realized that political and economic freedom were entangled and therefore, he insisted that abdicating any of them would imply a renunciation of the freedom that almost all Spanish American nations had already achieved and, consequently, their subjection to U.S. neocolonialism. Whereas he asserted that political freedom was an indispensable means to accomplish the nation’s social well-being without strife, rather than an ultimate goal to fulfill its happiness, he also acknowledged that [l]a libertad política que cría sin duda y asegura la dignidad del hombre, no trajo a su establecimiento ni crió en su desarrollo, un sistema económico que garantizase a lo menos una forma de distribución equitativa de la riqueza” (Martí qtd. in Carlos Ripoll 28; “[p]olitical freedom without a doubt gives rise to and ensures human dignity, but neither its advent nor its development has created an economic system that guarantees even an equitable distribution of wealth”; Ripoll 28). Facing the aporia between freedom and equality, Martí admitted that political freedom was essential and yet, insufficient to solve the problem of inequality and unequal distribution of wealth. Along this line, Boaventura de Sousa Santos argues that Martí and the Brazilian modernist poet Oswald de Andrade (1890-1954) were thinking of “a new kind of law and a new kind of rights. For them, the right to be equal involves the right to be different, as the right to be different involves the right to be equals” (204). I concur with Sousa Santos’s claim. Martí’s writings bear witness to this dialectic between equality and difference that Sousa Santos underlies as do his reflections on issues of right, law, and ethics. We should recall that he obtained a degree in law with a focus on civil rights

during his exile in Spain (1871-1874), and served as diplomatic consul for several Latin American countries during his life time.

Confronting the kind of freedom Martí saw succeed in the United States, which he characterized as "señorial y sectaria, de puño de encaje y de dosel de terciopelo," local, selfish and unfair freedom that promised to reproduce power imbalance in the hemisphere through neocolonization, he articulates a Lezamian image that poetically historicizes a counterpoint that reorients this "directional causality" by calling for a "libertad humanitaria y expansiva, no local, ni de raza, ni de secta" (2: 98, 100; "manorial and sectarian, with lace cuffs and a velvet canopy"; "expansive and humanitarian freedom, neither local nor racial nor sectarian"; Randall et al. 74, 80). Martí addressed democracy's contradictions by resorting to ethics and universal principles of right, producing in the process a "historic vision" that symbolically archives in discourse and cultural memory his "expansive and humanitarian freedom" as one that brings forth a claim for equality based on the recognition of difference and freedom as a universal right to which both human beings and nations are entitled. His notion of freedom is certainly liberal, yet, as he argued in his essay "La democracia práctica" (1876) ["Practical Democracy"], his liberalism is rooted in a universal principle of freedom that recognizes that "[c]on ser hombres, traemos a la vida el principio de la libertad," yet also that "con ser inteligentes, tenemos el deber de realizarla" (2: 388; "[b]y virtue of being human, we bring to life the principle of freedom"; "and by being intelligent we must bring it into realization"). Freedom could be neither the right of "the strongest" nor solely concerned with local circumstances. Rather, the kind of freedom Martí advocated implied, on the one hand, "the acknowledgment of some notion of common humanity that translates

ethically into an idea of shared or common moral duties towards others by virtue of this humanity" which is a founding principle of cosmopolitanism as a political theory, and a radical concern "con la seguridad y dicha de otros hombres," on the other hand (Catherine Lu qtd. in Garrett Wallace Brown and David Held 1; 2: 670; "with the happiness and security of others"; 356).

In this regard, and looking for "the counterbalance and offset of our materialistic and vulgar American democracy and for the spiritualization thereof," Whitman in his *Democratic Vistas* provided his ideal of democracy with "adhesiveness or love" (981). There, he outlined his notion of "adhesive love" as that which not only "fuses, ties, and aggregates, making the races comrades and fraternizing all," but also encompasses an "intense and loving comradeship, the personal and passionate attachment of man to man" (Ibid). In his view, democracy was "[n]ot that half only, individualism, which isolates," "adhesiveness or love" was its other half (949). In so arguing, the poet crystallizes "adhesive love" in a Lezamian image that re-cognizes and resignifies democracy as follows, "I say democracy infers such loving comradeship, as its most inevitable twin or counterpart, without which it will be incomplete, in vain, and incapable of perpetuating itself" (981). In this way, Whitman offers a notion of democracy that summons "adhesive love," which conjures a fraternal, homoerotic, and religious fire or love, and individualism in a poetic image that participates in history by re-imagining and inscribing into discourse an ideal of democracy that entails both aspects as constitutive and, therefore, essential for its existence and perpetuation. The poet's "historic vision" is then supplemented with his belief in "[t]hat which really balances and conserves the social and political world is not so much legislation, police, treaties, and dread of punishment, as the

latent eternal intuitional sense, in humanity, of fairness, manliness, decorum, etc. Indeed, this perennial regulation, control, and oversight, by self- suppliance, is *sine qua non* to democracy" (989). Whitman's emphasis on "adhesive love," individual freedom and sovereignty, a sense of justice, and ethical self-regulation as indispensable to democracy, certainly, bridges his ideal of freedom with Martí's. Yet, the latter demanded more than "loving comradeship," universal notions of justice, and an "athletic" or critical exercise of individual freedom to realize, secure, and perpetuate democracy (982).

Though Whitman contended that despite the common mistaken assumption of democracy as a "throwing aside of law, and running riot," "democracy too is law, and of the strictest, amplest kind … it is the superior law, not alone that of physical force, the body, which, adding to, it supersedes that of the spirit," he rather explored ways to democratize "the body" and "the spirit" or to train "man to become a law, and series of laws unto himself" so that he was able to rule himself in his relations to others and the state (948, 942). As "children of the fire," rather than of "mire," as Octavio Paz would have them, Whitman, Darío, Martí, and Dickinson embraced self-reliance or individual sovereignty as *sine qua non* for freedom. However, Martí's freedom reanimated "el sentido ético-ontológico del bien común" or the "ética-ontólogica solidaria" that asserted the principle of being in the world in function and relation with others, which Enrique Dussel argues was introduced in history with the Judeo-Christian morality and then forgotten in the centuries following the Middle Ages[49] (Dussel 73, 72; "the ethical-

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[49] In his study of the history of ethics in Western philosophical thought from the Greeks through the twentieth century, *Para una de-strucción de la historia de la ética* (1972), Dussel states that "[l]a perfección ontológica o moral del hombre en el ethos judeo-cristiano no se logra en la *solitaria bonitas* del romano o del griego, sino en el

ontological sense of common good"; "ontological and solidary ethics"). His radical freedom entailed an ethical dimension that signified universal moral duties owed to all human beings indistinguishably, a feeling of love for humanity and a struggle for its common good that deflected the behavior or habits enforced by the prevailing individualist ethos, reorienting it toward a solidary ethos. In addition, his notion of freedom established the understanding and belief that to achieve a balance in the social and political world, fulfill, and protect freedom, ethics, right, and law were to be used as means to recuperate and ensure freedom.

In his article "Clases orales" (1875) ["Oral Lessons"], Martí welcomed the inauguration of public oral lessons of the Colegio de Abogados [School of Lawyers] in Mexico by reflecting on issues of right, education, and oratory. In so doing, he contended that right "es el fundamento de conocer: no es el resultado de haber conocido," and that "[e]xiste en el hombre la fuerza de lo justo, y éste es el primer estado del Derecho" (2: 723; "is the principle of knowing: not the result of having known"; "there exists in man the force of what is just, and this is the first state of Right"). In his view, though "los sistemas políticos en que domina la fuerza crean derechos que carecen totalmente de justicia," human beings inexorably tend toward independence and justice creating "en sus evoluciones rebeldes hacia su libertad oprimida y esencial, un conjunto de derechos de

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compromiso histórico y social del profeta que alcanza la plenitud humana en el sacrificio de su vida, por sus hermanos" (71; "the ontological or moral perfection of man in the Judeo-Christian ethos is not accomplished in the Greek or Roman *solitaria bonitas*, but in the historical and social commitment of the prophet who achieves human fulfillment sacrificing his life for his brothers;" my translation). For a discussion of Martí's freedom in relation to sacrifice, see "Aporía y compatibilismo en las ideas de libertad de José Martí" in Aida Beaupied's *Libertad en cadenas: sacrificio, aporias y perdón en las letras cubanas* (2013).

reconquista, derechos medios, derechos parciales, que producen la jurisprudencia" (Ibid; "the political systems in which force rules create rights that completely lack of justice"; "in their rebellious evolutions toward their essential and oppressed freedom, a set of rights of reconquest, intermediate and partial rights, that produce jurisprudence"). By outlining a concept of right that entails, on the one hand, a universal principle of justice, a quest and process of knowing as to how to exercise freedom and, on the other hand, a notion of jurisprudence or of "la ciencia de la aplicación de las formulas, lo que bien pudiera llamarse justicia de aplicación y relación" as resulting from different kinds of rights that human beings enact in their struggle to reconquer freedom, Martí foregrounded right, law, and ethics as constitutive and essential to achieve freedom (Ibid; "the science of the application of formulas, what could well be called justice of application and relation"). Such conceptions are going to be shortly after crystallized in a Lezamian image that archives and passes on the knowledge and lessons of those intellectuals that dedicated themselves to spread and study a "democracia pacífica" or the "filosofía de la paz" that, as he argued, was highly esteemed and already rooted in South America (2: 386, 387; "peaceful democracy"; "philosophy of peace").

Discussing *La democracia práctica* (1876) [*Practical Democracy*] by the Argentine lawyer and deputy Luis Varela, in his eponymous article, Martí praises Varela's book (which examines the political elements that configured the American republics and the history of the unfolding of democracy in America and Europe) as a cornerstone in the study of the configuration of the American democratic thought. An American text that teaches that, "[s]e es liberal por ser hombre; pero se ha de estudiar, de adivinar, de prevenir, de crear mucho en el arte de la aplicación, para ser liberal

americano" (2: 388; "[o]ne is liberal just by the fact of being a human being; yet, one has to study, foretell, anticipate, and create a lot in the art of application to be an American liberal"). In Varela's work, Martí finds and captures "el ideal perseguido, la visión impalpable" or the notion of freedom that brings together his imagination and aspirations as well as those of all who strove for a "peaceful democracy" as "la libertad afirmada por el derecho de todos, y garantizada en sus beneficios por el respeto mutuo" (2: 387; "the ideal to be pursued, the intangible vision"; "a freedom sustained by the right of everybody, and guaranteed in its benefits by mutual respect"). The lawyer and the poet concur in the conjuration of a Lezamian image that opens a parenthesis in history by grounding freedom on principles of right, law, and ethics, and arguing for the recognition and respect of individuals and nations as equals and therefore as equally entitled to the universal right to be free. Martí's cosmopolitan freedom not only posed ethical obligations and responsibilities owed to human beings beyond the ties created by the nation, but also strove to achieve power balances among individuals and nation-states by inscribing justice and mutual respect in precepts of right and law.

In this regard, John D. Blanco in his study of works by José Martí and the Philippine author José Rizal (1861-1896) observes that "the way in which international legitimacy and right became a central issue between the imperialist powers and nationalist leaders like José Rizal and José Martí" indicates how expressions of modern nationalism were a response to imperialism (95). Indeed, Martí aimed to deflect the political, epistemological, and ethical "directional causality" championed by imperial democracy by resignifying freedom. As his writings about the 1889-1890 Congress of Washington make apparent, he insisted that the recognition, respect, and protection of the

political freedom, the national sovereignty, and the right to self-determination of the Spanish American nations were fundamental to sustain a peaceful and more just coexistence intra- and transnationally in the hemisphere. His claims relied on liberal principles, yet also on dictums of international right and law, as expressed in the Westphalian or Vattelian sovereignty[50] and the international legal sovereignty, which, despite its uninterrupted violations, rule the relations of the international community until today. Vattelian sovereignty, then, "refers to the exclusion of external sources of authority both *de jure* and *de facto*" and establishes that states within their boundaries have "a monopoly over authoritative decision-making … [and] follow the rule of non-intervention in the internal affairs of others" (Krasner 232). Therefore, international legal sovereignty alludes to the mutual recognition among independent territorial entities and is correlative with liberal principles applied at domestic level, such as the understanding that "[s]tates in the international system, like individuals in domestic polities, are free and equal" (Krasner 232, 233). As an American liberal, Martí studied, created, foretold and, above all, admonished against "the seven-league giant's" ambitions, disclosing its designs, denouncing its interventions, and defending the Vattelian and the international legal sovereignty of "Our America." His works made a significant impact on Spanish American intellectuals and international politics, since, as Krasner notes, Latin American states championed the defense of the principle of non-intervention during the nineteenth century, achieving a formal recognition of the United States in 1930 (233). The ethics,

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[50] Stephen D. Krasner points out that though this notion of sovereignty has often been related with the Peace of Westphalia (1648), Westphalian or Vattelian sovereignty with a global scope was introduced by the international legal theorists Emer de Vattel and Christian Wolff by the second half of the eighteenth century.

politics, and aesthetics conveyed in his *ouvre* have fascinated and resonated in the works of authors and scholars alike throughout the Americas; they continue to be valuable to understand and re-vision our present modernities and their directional causalities as well as to enlighten their future.

"Who Shall Hold in Behemoth? Who Bridle Leviathan?"[51]

The Nicaraguan poet Rubén Darío recognized in Martí a martyr, a prophet, a master, a philosopher, and always a poet who was able to portray the United States as an "estupendo y encantador diorama que casi se diría aumenta el color de la visión real," and a threat about which he "no cesó nunca de predicar a las naciones de su sangre," cautioning them so that they could discern in their Pan-Americanist intentions nothing but "la uñagaza y la trampa de los comerciantes de la yanquería" ("José Martí" 306, "El triunfo de Calibán" 161; "stupendous and enchanting diorama that one might almost say heighten the color of reality"; "never ceased urging the nations of his blood"; "the Yankee businessmen's traps and snares"; Andrew Hurley 450, 509). The fulfillment of Martí's prophecies remarkably seen in the Spanish-American War (1898), which resulted in the U.S. colonization of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, led Darío and other American intellectuals to strongly react against U.S. neocolonialism. In the process, they fostered Martí's Americanism as well as Hispanic and Pan-Latinist cultural filiations that, as José María Martínez argues, put off the critique of Spanish colonialism and the Cuban

[51] Walt Whitman in *Democratic Vistas* (989).

aspirations of emancipation (196).[52] As politically problematic as the solidarity with Spain rather than Cuba appears, Martínez reminds us that the support of Hispanic and Pan-Latinist identitarian ideologies in opposition to Anglo-Saxons' by Darío and other Spanish American intellectuals should be understood in conjunction with the debates on cultural identity and race relations that were ongoing in the West during the nineteenth century, which were fueled by Charles Darwin's and Herbert Spencer's scientific theories of evolution (197). These theories and ideologies played a crucial role in the reconfiguration and modernization of the Western hegemonic knowledge and epistemologies. As the works of our poets evince, they were functional for the justification of imperialist and nationalist endeavors, and the (re)creation of disparate myths. Oscillating between *e pluribus unum* and *ex uno plura* (Out of One, Many), while endorsing ideologies of Hispanism, Pan-Latinism, Anglo-Saxonism, and Americanism, Whitman, Martí, and Darío invariably (re)produced exceptionalist discourses and myths of integration that still operate today.

Yet, unlike Whitman and Martí, who came to epitomize notions of nationalism and Americanism, Darío was harshly criticized by his contemporaries for his lack of Americanism. Surely, "[e]l indio divino," as José Ortega y Gasset called Darío, had to grow a thick skin to defend his cosmopolitanism and especially his "querida, de París" (Ortega y Gasset in *PC* 470; Darío 472; "the divine Indian"; "lover, from Paris"). Critics

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[52] Whereas Hispanism "rose in the nineteenth century, together with the national philologies, as a compensatory strategy to offset Spain's staggering territorial losses in America" that promoted a trans-Atlantic Hispanic culture grounded on language, customs and spiritual values (Juan Ramon Resina 163), theories of Pan-Latinism championed a sense of unity among the nations of Greco-Latin heritage (Greece, Italy, France, Spain, Portugal and Ibero-American countries) articulated around cultural and biological common bonds (Martinez 196).

seemed to agree that his writings did not conform to what was perceived as American or as an Americanist aesthetic. Hence, he was diagnosed with "mental Gallicism" by the Spanish author Juan Valera, censured for his excessive imitation of European authors by the French-born Argentine writer Paul Groussac, from whom he borrowed the analogy between the United States and Caliban, and dismissed as a representative American poet by the Uruguayan writer José Enrique Rodó in 1898.[53] As the latter asserted, alluding to the author of *Azul* (1888) [*Blue*] and *Prosas profanas y otros poemas* (1896) [*Profane Prose and Other Poems*], "[i]ndudablemente, Rubén Darío no es el poeta de América" (Rodó 257; "[u]ndoubtedly, Rubén Darío is not the poet of America"). Though the worldliness of his writings can be noted since his early poetry, [54] it was not until the last decade of the century that he began to keenly participate in hemispheric and trans-Atlantic politics by aligning with Martí's Americanism and joining "el coro de naciones que hacen contrapeso en la balanza sentimental a la fuerte y osada raza del Norte" (Darío *OC* 216; "the choir of nations that offset the strong and brave race of the North in the sentimental scale").

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[53] For a discussion that explores Darío's filiation with France in relation to its cultural influence in Chile, where he wrote and published *Azul*, and South America, see José Ballón's "V.I. El ascenso del poeta cortesano moderno: Rubén Darío en Chile (del campo de batalla al parque Isidora Cousiño en Lota" in *Martí y Darío ante América y Europa* (2012).

[54] Despite the differences among our poets' life experience, Martí and Darío depended on their work as journalists to live, travelled extensively, and lived in American and European cities, creating ties with their intelligentsias, presidents, high rank politicians, and native elites. Such intellectual and political exchanges not only manifested distinctively in their writings, but also resulted in their appointment as consuls of several Latin American countries, and in Darío's case also as diplomat, ambassador, and minister. Darío's engagement with the history and socio-political context of Central and South America can be seen as early as in *Primeras Poesías* (1880-1888) and "Canto épico a las glorias de Chile" (1887), which addresses the War of the Pacific (1879-1883) among Chile, Peru, and Bolivia.

As the contradictions of democracy in the international arena intensified, Darío, too, saw the need of establishing means to secure the political freedom and sovereignty of the Spanish American nation-states. However, unlike Martí, who criticized the Spanish, French, and U.S. (neo)colonialism and imperialism, Darío, due to his unsurmountable filiations with Spain and France, and the interventions of England and the United States in Central America, directed his critique toward the Anglo-Saxon empires. Consequently, in his article "John Bull For Ever!" (1895), he brings to light England's violation of the principle of succession in international right and, therefore, of the Vattelian and international legal sovereignty of Honduras and Nicaragua, as well as the complicity between the U.S. and the British imperialist enterprise in the region. In so doing, he not only reminds his audience that the British usurpations in Central America began in the early eighteenth century and continued until 1783 when England left the territory, but also recounts the history of treaties between the British and the Spanish empire, stressing the former's recognition and respect of them until 1820. Nevertheless, after Honduras and Nicaragua achieved their independence in 1821, England refused to respect their right of succession, or the ruling precept that signified that "todos los derechos territoriales de soberanía y dominio que antes de la revolución tenia España" after the independence of its territories were automatically transferred to them (144; "all the territorial rights of sovereignty and dominion that Spain had before the revolution"). The disavowal of this right enabled England to violate the Vattelian and international legal sovereignty of these countries by appropriating the Honduran Island Roatán (1841), claiming a protectorate in Bluefields (1847-1848) in the Nicaraguan Mosquito Coast, and requesting an economic compensation from Nicaragua for expelling them from their alleged territory (1894). As

Darío adds, "[a]quel era un momento oportuno para hacer efectiva la declaración de Monroe de 1823;" yet, the dispute ended with "el miserable subtergio que se llama 'tratado de Clayton-Bulwer'" (1850), which was tailored to the U.S. and British inter-Oceanic interests (144; "that was a timely moment to make effective the Monroe declaration of 1823"; "with the miserable excuse that is called 'Clayton-Bulwer Treaty'").

Whereas Darío's account of the events aims to correct the historical inaccuracies he found in an article about the conflict between England and Nicaragua for Bluefields published by the U.S. *Harper's Weekly* in 1894, as well as its "criterio completamente inglés" by criticizing the prevailing power imbalance and the British violation of international right, his text also makes apparent how the Indigenous people called Mosquitos, which names the territory in dispute and therefore its legitimate owners, became the cannon-fodder of the British annexationist strategy and the victims of the same kind of violence, injustice, and abuse of power he was contesting (142; "quite English approach"). His contradictions, as we have seen, were not exceptional, since all our poets upheld ideologies of liberalism and nationalism. They not only harmonized and eclipsed racial, ethnic, and sexual contradictions that the national projects they felt accountable for "demanded," but also defended their sovereignty intra- and transnationally, producing competing discourses, myths, and mystifications. Along this line, Jorge Camacho traces the dialogue Darío establishes in "John Bull For Ever!" with the writings of the U.S. diplomat William Lyndsay Scruggs, and Wolfred Nelson's article published in *Harper's Weekly*. He contends that Darío dismisses England's and the Mosquitos people's claims over the Mosquito Coast, on the one hand. On the other hand,

that he omits that the "Managua Treaty" had recognized the autonomous status of the Mosquitos people in 1860, and that their territory represented a significant source of profit for Nicaragua, which were aspects Nelson's text brought up (Camacho 8). Indeed, if freedom and the nation required "sacrifices," Darío had no doubt who had to make them. The Mosquitos people were thus chosen to give up their territory, sovereignty, right to freedom and self-determination for Nicaragua; a discursive, ideological and political formula he reiterates in his poem "Del campo" ["To the Country"] of *Prosas profanas* by making disappear "el fuego y el hervor" of the Indians and the "*gauchos*" from his "regio Buenos Aires," his beloved "Cosmópolis" (*PC* 480; "the fire, and terrific heat;" "Royal Buenos Aires"; Charles B. McMichael 42).

Admittedly, the contradictions, violence, and injustice brought about by intra-national expansionism and the defense of the political freedom and national sovereignty of the Spanish American states posed no problem for Darío. As Camacho's discussion of Darío's and Martí's support of national expansionism in Nicaragua and Argentina indicates, both poets either adjusted or disregarded the contradictions of democracy in the national context. Yet, Camacho errs when stating that Scruggs and Darío "solamente encuentran una forma de impedir que Gran Bretaña se apropiase de estos terrenos en el futuro y esto era invocando la doctrina Monroe y ocupando militarmente aquellos terrenos" (7; "only find one way to prevent Great Britain from appropriating these territories in the future, and this was invoking the Monroe Doctrine and occupying them militarily"). In so arguing, he disregards Darío's critique of the British violation of international rights and the U.S. complicity with England in their attempts to control inter-Oceanic routes through Central America, as well as the poet's irony, which is how I

read Darío's invocation of the Monroe Doctrine and of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty that supports his claim. Darío joined Martí in defending "our America's" freedom and sovereignty by questioning the legitimacy of John Bull's and Uncle Sam's imperialist interventions according to precepts of international right, and denouncing their blatant violations. In fact, both poets highlighted the dangers and implications for democracy and peace caused by inequality and the emergence of "rogue states."[55]

Whereas Whitman genuinely worried about "who shall hold in behemoth? who bridle leviathan?," Martí and Darío had to actually face their monstrosity and struggle to counterbalance it (989). Darío's response to the United States' roguish behavior and unbridled power in "El triunfo de Calibán" (1898) ["The Triumph of Caliban"], published shortly before the Spanish-American War broke out, was categorical. There, he symbolically declares war on Behemoth's or Caliban's imperialist aspirations, opening a parenthesis in discourse that renders the following Lezamian image:

> [p]ero hay quienes me digan: "¿No ve usted que son los más fuertes?" ... Sí, ¿cómo no voy a ver el monte que forma el lomo del mamut? Pero ante Darwin y

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[55] Discussing the French word 'voyou' and the expression "etat voyou" and its translation into English as "rogue state" in relation to the use of the latter by the United States in the aftermath of the Cold War, Derrida noted, on the one hand, that the character of 'voyou' always implies "a denunciation, a complaint or an accusation, a charge, an evaluation, and a verdict. As such, it announces, prepares, and begins to justify some sanction. The Etat voyou must be punished, contained, rendered harmless, if need be by the force of law [*droit*] and the right [*droit*] of force" (79). On the other hand, he pointed to the untranslatability of 'voyou' into English and therefore to its possibility to stand either as a noun that may connote that "a state is substantially voyou" and so that it qualifies to "disappear as a nonconstitutional state or a state of nonlaw" or as a "quality temporarily attributed out of some strategic motivation by certain states to some other state that, from some point of view or in some context, during a limited period of time, would be exhibiting voyou behavior, appearing not to respect the mandates of international law, the prevailing rules and the force of law international deontology, such as the so-called legitimate and law-abiding states interpret them in accordance with their own interests" (79, 80).

> Spencer no voy a poner la cabeza sobre la piedra para que me aplaste el cráneo la gran Bestia. Behemot es gigantesco; pero no he de sacrificarme por mi propia voluntad bajo sus patas, y si me logra atrapar, al menos mi lengua ha de concluir de dar la maldición última, con el último aliento de vida. Y yo que he sido partidario de Cuba libre… soy amigo de España en el instante que la miro agredida por un enemigo brutal, que lleva como enseña la violencia, la fuerza y la injusticia. (162)
>
> [b]ut there are those who will say to me: "Do you not see that the Yankees are the strongest? ...Yes, of course; how can I not see the mountain formed by the mammoth's hump? But no matter what Darwin and Spencer say, I am not going to docilely put my head on the block so that the Great Beast can crush it. Behemoth is huge, but I am not going to throw myself under its enormous feet. And if it catches me, at least my tongue shall give one last curse, with my last breath of life. And I, who have always favored a free Cuba… am nonetheless a friend of Spain when I see it attacked by a brutal enemy whose ensign is Violence, Force, and Injustice.] (Hurley 512)

Though Martí and Darío inscribed a critique of the logos that justified European and U.S. American hegemony and civilizing mission, Martí also envisioned "our America's" becoming "con Bolívar de un brazo y Herbert Spencer de otro" (2: 101; "with Bolívar on one arm and Herbert Spencer on the other"; Randall et al. 81). Darío's poetic image, however, symbolically archives his critique and rejection of Spencer, making thus manifest a rupture with positivism and its progress that signals, at least nominally, a difference with Martí. In fact, whether Martí's invocation of Spencer signifies his engagement with racial theories or his legitimation of positivism, his writings also provide evidence of the anti-positivist stance that Darío highlights in this and other texts.[56] Both poets considered that material progress, as the United States demonstrated, did not equal the moral or spiritual progress of a nation, which as José María Martínez

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[56] Carlos Javier Morales in *La poética de José Martí y su contexto* (1994) discusses Martí's ambivalence toward Spencer, noting in the poet both "la aceptación moderada y crítica del método positivista" (108; "a moderate acceptance and a critique of the positivist method").

argues was a belief that Hispanists tended to adopt (199), and that we would later see crystallized in Rodó's famous essay "Ariel" (1900). Yet, unlike Martí's Hispanism, which was critical of the Spanish colonialism and imperialism, Darío's Hispanism and his support to "esa ilustre monarquía empobrecida y caída," as he characterized Spain in "Crepúsculo de España" (1898) ["Spain's Twilight"], was unconditional (163; "that illustrious yet impoverished and fallen monarchy"). His Lezamian image crystallizes not only a complaint and a denunciation of the U.S. roguish behavior in the hemisphere, but also a plea to the international community to contain its abuse of power. Hence, and stressing the unevenness of the struggle, Darío summons Pan-Latinist, Hispanist, and Americanist ideologies and discourses throughout his essay, making a final call to unite and redirect the Behemoth's course by rebelling against the transformation of "violence, force, and injustice" into right as the United States and England forged ahead in their race to own and control the world. With a rallying cry against the rise of "rogue states," he reasserts his "one last curse" as a forthright refusal to abdicate justice and peace and accept Caliban's triumph as inevitable.

In Darío's view, Caliban championed a notion of civilization, progress, and democracy that he condemned and opposed. Undeterred by Martí's literary recommendations, his admiration was reserved neither for Emerson nor for Whitman, but extended to Edgar Allan Poe, or "el cisne desdichado" as he named him in his essay "Edgar Allan Poe" of *Los raros* (1896) [*The Misfits*][57] (295; "that ill-starred swan";

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[57] A collection of essays that disclosed Darío's personal Parnassus of authors he admired and considered as the most outstanding voices of the ongoing poetic and aesthetic modernization in Europe and America. Out of the twenty "queers" or "misfits" he anthologized in the first edition of his book, only Edgar Allan Poe, José Martí, Isidore-

Hurley 403). Unlike Poe, (who, in Darío's view, died unacknowledged, poor, drunk, and exiled in his own homeland thanks to Caliban), Emerson and Whitman, as he makes explicit in "El triunfo de Calibán," were representative of Caliban's cyclopean culture. As he stated, while characterizing the latter, "[e]nemigos de toda idealidad, son en su progreso apoplético, perpetuos espejos de aumento; pero Sir Emerson bien calificado está como luna de Carlyle; su Whitman con sus versículos a hacha, es un profeta demócrata, al uso del Tío Sam" (160; "[e]nemies of all idealism, in their progress they are apoplectic, perpetual mirrors of expansion, but Sir Emerson, rightly classified is like the moon to Carlyle's sun; their Whitman with his hatchet-hewn verses is a democratic prophet in the service of Uncle Sam"; 507). Darío was certainly less generous than Martí in his characterization of the U.S. poets; therefore, he underscored the colonialism and imperialism they also conveyed by echoing Groussac's critique of Emerson as the reflection of Carlyle in his essay "*Prosas profanas* por Rubén Darío" (1897) ["*Profane Prose* by Rubén Darío"], and adding his own about Whitman's servility to U.S. imperialism. In his essay dedicated to Poe, Darío depicted his impressions of New York's hectic modernity and monstrosity, bringing to light freedom's perversion as follows "[a]ve, Libertad, llena de fuerza; el Señor es contigo: bendita tú eres. Pero ¿sabes? … Anda en la tierra otra que ha usurpado tu nombre, y que en vez de la antorcha, lleva la tea" (294; "[h]ail Liberty, full of strength, blessed art thou among women above all women. But wouldst thou know the unhappy truth … Abroad in the earth there is another, who has usurped thy name, and instead of a torch bears a flaming brand"; 401).

Lucien Ducasse (1846-1870), more famously known as Comte de Lautrémont, and Augusto de Armas (1869-1893) were selected of the Americas, the last two poets only published in French.

As his address to the Statue of Liberty illustrates, the poet not only extolled freedom's magnificence and disclosed its perversibility, but also reasserted the existence of competing notions of freedom, as the distinction between the "torch" and the "brand," or between a notion of freedom that is to enlighten people's path to emancipation and a deceptive, warlike freedom suggests.

The poet reinscribed his antagonism to "esa democracia rubicunda, que abusa de su cuerpo apoplético y de su cíclopeo apetito" in several texts (163; "that blonde and contentious democracy that abuses of its apoplectic body and cyclopean appetite"). However, "A Roosevelt" ["To Roosevelt"] of *Cantos de vida y esperanza* (1905) [*Songs of Life and Hope*] is likely one of the most well-known expressions of his critique of the U.S. imperialist ambitions in the hemisphere. His poem invokes, archives, and passes on central aspects of his interpellations to the U.S. "directional causality," be it in the form of war or as walking softly with "a big stick" to remember Roosevelt's statement that summed up his foreign policy in the Americas. As the poem reads, "[j]untaís al culto de Hércules el culto de Mammón; / y alumbrando el camino de la fácil conquista, / la Libertad levanta su antorcha en Nueva York" (*OC* 541; "[y]ou join the cult to Hercules with the cult to Mammon. / [a]nd lighting the broad straight path that leads to easy / Conquests, / Lady Liberty raises her torch in New York City"; Greg Simon and Steven F. White 121). Unmasking U.S. freedom as one driven by Force and Greed, as Hercules and Mammon symbolize, Darío emphasizes violence, ambition, and injustice as the fuel of the brand that illuminates "el camino de la fácil conquista" in New York. Yet, as the final line of the poem states: "[y], pues contáis con todo, falta una cosa: ¡Dios!," the poet reasserts his refusal to accept Caliban's deceptive and warlike freedom as inevitable and,

even more so, to comply with it (*OC* 542; "[a]nd you think you have it all, but one thing is missing: God!"; 121).

Imagining the Nonexistent: Giving Gravity to a Critical, Humanitarian, and Peaceful Democracy

Dickinson, Martí, Whitman, and Darío invested themselves in assessing and re-imagining what was absent in the (post)colonial modernities they experienced. However, as we have also seen, not only did their concerns and goals differ in the processes of democratization, but also the meanings they ascribed to the word "democracy." Re-visioning the foundations and promises that had engendered and sustained the American nations, our poets contested, re-signified, and deflected the "directional causality" promoted by the universal abstracts that formed the ideological and rhetorical bedrock of the European Enlightenment and its purveyed modernity. While we cannot dismiss the possibility that liberalism sprang from genuine aspirations of reformation, neither can we overlook its inherent contradictions. As Domenico Losurdo and Beate Jahn argue, unlike what is commonly understood, liberalism is not a political project of universal freedom, rather it is an exclusionary project that in Losurdo's view is trapped in a dialectic between emancipation and "dis-emancipation," as it claims for freedom but at the same time requires the denial of freedom to the *others* it creates, whereas for Jahn it allows "the pursuit of political emancipation and economic appropriation through oppression and expropriation" (Losurdo 301; Jahn 52). Hence, and drawing from John Locke's *Second Treatise* (1689), where he systematized the emerging liberal ideas by laying out and interrelating three core aspects, that is, the economic based on private property, the

normative related to individual freedom, and the political through government by consent (43), Jahn contends that liberalism

> aims to establish individual freedom through private property and to protect and extend this freedom through government by consent. It pursues this goal through the privatization/expropriation of common property which requires the maintenance of unequal power relations (by economic, political, ideological or military means). And it justifies this inequality through a philosophy of history that attributes to different actors different levels of development corresponding to different rights and obligations. (71)

Thus understood, liberalism implies an interrelation between the national and international spheres that is sustained by a politics of oppression and inequality based on "privatization/expropriation" and "the maintenance of unequal power relations" through the use of force, be it by the denial of rights or the infliction of political, economic, and military violence, which in conjunction with modern capitalism has ultimately shaped the modern world-system.

Although in varying degrees of political awareness that led them to endorse distinct objectives that resulted in manifold historical outcomes, Dickinson, Martí, Darío, and Whitman engaged with liberalism and confronted its aporias by addressing issues of freedom and equality as manifested in democracy. Whereas Martí's individual freedom was constantly menaced, as we might recall he faced prison in Cuba, exile, and often had to camouflage his identity due to his revolutionary activity in the United States, all our poets enjoyed the privilege of individual freedom and made use of it. Self-reliance and individual freedom, as they exposed, were as integral to democracy as it was their critical or "athletic" exercise, which all of them defended and demonstrated with their own practice, but that was especially highlighted by Dickinson and Whitman. Deprived of civil and political freedom, Dickinson not only advocated for equality between the sexes

and for women's full access to citizenship, but also highlighted dissent and rebellion as constitutive of freedom, as forces that in leading to action could keep change going. By exercising her sovereignty and individual freedom and choosing not to conform to the establishment, Dickinson aimed to disturb the seemingly eternal slumber of the "Fathers," or to prevent inertia and stagnation, which, as she noted, was already monumentalized in the nation.[58]

The Lezamian image and the glimpses of her work we re-visioned and analyzed constitute reminders that reverberate in our present and trouble our own lethargy. Her "invisible causalities" urge us not only to re-assess the progress made in the struggle for civil and political freedom for women, black people, Indigenous peoples and other disenfranchised sectors of society since the nineteenth century, but also to take action upon what remains unattained. The stress on the critical exercise of individual freedom and the right to dissent, rebel, and disobey the "colonial power paradigm" that in one way or another all our poets professed points, on the one hand, to their discernment of democracy's autoimmune condition. On the other hand, they point to the ethical, civil, and political responsibility that we as citizens have when consenting whether by action, neglect, or inaction with the institutions that claiming to defend democracy and expand it on our behalf actually distort and pervert it, reproducing inequality and power imbalance. Their emphasis on these constitutive aspects of democracy emerges not only as a critique

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[58] Along this line, Michelle Kholer's "Dickinson and the Poetics of Revolution" (2010) offers an interesting analysis of poems written during and after the Civil War, where she notes that though the poet obliquely engaged with revolutionary discourses and the prevailing teleological notion of history, her poems "disrupt the nation's embrace of such a teleological narrative and effectively deflate the exceptionalism that cast America as the promised land" (21).

of the prevailing “coloniality of power” and a redirection of its epistemologies and rhetorics, but also as a political strategy to counterbalance or disrupt democracy’s aporias whose enduring presentness in our twenty-first century modernities is uncanny. The pervertibility of democracy and consequently, of the governments that in representing society are responsible for its protection and realization, as our poets remind us, had and keep having devastating implications nationally and transnationally. Which in light of the increasing dispossession of the civil liberties already attained, the seemingly absolute power of corporate capitalism and the overt servility of governments to its interests cannot continue to be ignored by citizenry nor by scholars.

Whitman argued that democracy was a word whose history “remains unwritten, because that history has yet to be enacted” (960). Our poets keenly participated in the writing and enactment of its modern history by producing competing notions of democracy, which, however, coincided and complemented each other in aspects like the one just highlighted. Given the evidence we have analyzed in the works selected, and what can be found throughout his *ouvre*, it would not be unsafe to state that Martí out of our group of poets was the one who had a broader and more thorough perspective about the contradictions of liberalism and the demands implied in being an “American liberal.” If liberalism swings between emancipation and “dis-emancipation” and relies upon the maintenance of asymmetrical power relations that justify inequality through rhetorics that enforce difference to either grant or deny “rights and obligations,” as Losurdo and Jahn contend, Martí’s notion of “humanitarian and expansive freedom” strove to divert this “directional causality” by establishing freedom as the right to which all human beings and nations, without distinctions of any sort, were inherently and equally entitled. In

contrast to Whitman's idea of expansive democracy, which signified the subsumption of difference and annexation of its sovereign and individual existence into his self-evident superior imperial *unum*, Martí's implied a notion of inclusiveness that is founded on principles of justice and equality. In fact, whereas Whitman's democracy is grounded on a notion of right as force that translated as the reason and the law of the strongest, Martí's democracy is built upon a conception of right as the force of justice and as a process of knowing how to be free that is to be complemented with the jurisprudence or the set of rights created by people in their inevitable struggle for freedom.

Likewise, though Whitman made clear that democracy could not be fully achieved and perpetuated in the Greco-Roman *solitaria bonitas*, to borrow Dussel's words, or only through individualism, his blend of individualism and "adhesive love" results in a "loving comradeship" or a sense of fraternizing where filiation or interests in common can perfectly determine who are to be considered as brothers and who are not. Martí's revival of the Judeo-Christian ethos, however, enabled him to open a parenthesis in the dominant individualist and fraternal liberal ethos to introject an ethical dimension that in re-cognizing all human beings as equals by virtue of their humanity posed moral responsibilities for the *others*' well-being, happiness, and security that are rooted in both solidarity and empathy. Martí's Lezamian images represent slant images or refractions that in opposing "the coloniality of power" gave gravity to the nonexistent and re-oriented the directional causalities imposed by European and U.S. modernities. They poetically historicized epistemological, ethical, mnemonic, and political perspectives that illuminated the struggle for freedom in America and its future. In Martí's "invisible causalities" not only do we find several ethical and political principles regarding

democracy that were later recognized and crystallized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), but also a systematic defense of the political freedom, sovereignty, and right to self-determination of the Spanish American nations that was supported on principles of international right and law.

As we discussed, Darío joined Martí in rebelling against the transformation of force and injustice into right that European and the U.S. imperialism were imposing *de facto* in the hemisphere. The expressions of decolonizing thinking they articulated in their Lezamian images established and symbolically archived a clear divide between the nations that respected and protected the right to freedom of all nations and those that regarded freedom as their privilege solely and, thus, violated the ruling dictums of international right and law in order to enforce their self-serving reasoning. While Noam Chomsky, Jacques Derrida, and William Blum[59] have acknowledged the rise of the United States as a rogue state after World War II, the works of our poets and the historical records they educe indicate that the United States was already consolidated as a global rogue state during their time. Though Martí's and Darío's efforts to combat and deter the abusive power and violence of the United States in the Americas nowadays appear as a cautionary tale of a nightmare from which we cannot wait to wake up, the need for a critical, humanitarian, and peaceful democracy remain as necessary and as urgent as ever. If the claim for respect and compliance with international right and law seemed the best political recourse, if not the only one, the American independent nations had to protect their freedom and sovereignty from the interventions and aggressions of

[59] See Derrida's *Rogues*: *Two Essays on Reason* (2005), Blum's *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower* (2005), and Chomsky's *Rogue States*: *The Rule of Force in World Affairs* (2000).

imperial powers by the late nineteenth century, the interventions of the United States in the Americas after they formally recognized the Vattelian sovereignty of the Latin American states in 1930 and the ineffectiveness in this regard of international institutions created after WWII such as the United Nations (1945), its Security Council (1946,) and the International Criminal Court (2002) reveal the dire complexities of our current global situation. As Derrida pointed out, not only questions of foreign policy, war and peace as central for a (re)signification of democracy have remained unaddressed until today, but also post-Kantian political thought of cosmopolitanism and that of international law that continue to rule the transnational institutions just mentioned expose that

> the democratic model (equality and freedom of sovereign state subjects, majority rule and so on) sometimes seems to become or tends to become "in spirit" the norm of this politics of international law. But this appearance is deceptive, and the question of a universal, international, interstate, and especially trans-state democratization remains an utterly obscure question of the future. (80-81)

Certainly, democracy's modern history in the Americas intra- and transnationally has accumulated many pages since the nineteenth century. Despite the progress made in terms of civil and political rights, the alarming power of corporate capitalism in defining and leading the destiny of the hemisphere and of the world suggests that the real gist of the word democracy, as Whitman stated, "still sleeps, quite unawakened" in a never ending "to-come" state (960). As the aporias of liberalism have deepened with its modernization during the second half of the twentieth century, the rallying cry for justice, peace, and democracy too has reached a global resonance and urgency, bringing to the fore "creation" as a means to decolonize our modernities just like Emerson, Bello, Echeverría, and their modernist successors aimed to do.

Though Octavio Paz argued that the belief in history as a continuous march toward the future collapsed after the 1950s because since then, the future has appeared as the holder of horror rather than as the possibility of perfection, displacing in this way the word "change" by "conservation," the works of our poets make apparent that modern America has constantly oscillated between change and preservation, and that it is actually poesis, dissent, and rebellion that have propelled change (151). Fire as a generative force blazed in our poets' works, setting in motion their desires and hopes for freedom in an inventive process that led them to engender "invisible causalities" that bore a critical summa of claims and imaginations of both the past and their time. Whereas there are no clear-cut solutions to the contradictions between freedom and equality embedded in democracy, the "invisible causalities" conveyed by our poets not only drove change in the past, but also continue to illuminate directions in our present. As Dickinson, Martí, Darío, and Whitman remind us, the possibility of materializing a critical, humanitarian, and peaceful democracy demands study, anticipation, creation, and above all action so that we intervene in culture through epistemological, ethical, and political strategies that can divert the dominant warlike and antidemocratic directional causalities. Thus, in the next chapter we shall examine Lezamian images that render visible how our poets transformed their literary traditions by producing epistemological, aesthetic, and ethical directions that have signaled the roads taken by modernist and contemporary inter-American poetic discourse.

CHAPTER III

RIDING ON FREEDOM'S BLAZING BACK: NINETEENTH-CENTURY MODERNIST POETIC IMAGES OF INTER-AMERICAN POESIS

TOWARD FREEDOM IN POETIC CREATION: MODERNIZATION, THE TURN TO THE WORLD, CRITICAL IMITATION AND *ARS COMBINATORIA*

José Ballón Aguirre in *Martí y Darío ante América y Europa: Textos y contextos contrarios* (2012) examines convergences and literary circuits that intertwine the Spanish American modern poetic tradition with the U.S. and European modern poetry. He proposes to consider the process of literary modernization in the Americas by the late nineteenth century in the context of what he (re)names as "*Renacimiento transamericano*" (29; "*trans-American Renaissance*"). In his view, this "trans-American Renaissance" inherited "una visión autóctona iconoclasta de encuadre romántico válida para todo el hemisferio, originalmente impulsada en *prosa* y *verso* por Andrés Bello, Edgar Allan Poe y, especialmente, Ralph Waldo Emerson" (29; "trans-American Renaissance"; "an autochthonous iconoclast vision of romantic roots that is valid for the whole hemisphere, which was originally propelled in *prose* and *verse* by Andrés Bello, Edgar Allan Poe and, especially, Ralph Waldo Emerson"). Ballón has furthered Rama's recognition of the links between Emerson and Martí by addressing Martí's aesthetics of vision, and examining intertextual and aesthetic relations between the poets. His last study brings forth Emerson's enthusiastic reception in Spanish America early in the 1860s, and "la formula óptico-poética" or the *hiperia* that bridges Martí's and Emerson's writings. In so doing, he provides an analysis of Martí and Darío in relation to the tension

he observes between *hiperia* and *imitatio* that is relevant to our discussion (278; "the poetic-visual formula").

In this chapter, we will explore ways in which Rubén Darío, Emily Dickinson, José Martí, and Walt Whitman unhinged the doors of "el mundo de la *poesis*" from their jambs in the Americas (Lezama Lima 52; "the world of *poesis*"). By examining the interplay between freedom and poesis as manifested in the entanglements between discourses about poetic creation, the world and its literatures, and distinctive expressions of realism,[60] we trace Lezamian images that convey aesthetic, epistemological, and ethical directional causalities that variously foregrounded unbridled freedom in poesis as principle and means to emancipate and modernize the American poetic expression from its colonial garments, giving gravitation to different modes of the mimetic in the process. In light of our findings, we argue not only that Darío and Dickinson are successors of the Americanist project of cultural and political freedom advanced by Bello, Emerson, and Echeverría that we have explored in the previous chapters, but also that these two poets, like Martí and Whitman, are crucial links of the modern inter-American poetic "chain of affinity" we analyze in this study (Emerson 2: 16). Hence, we think that Ballón's dismissal of the aporetic character of the *imitatio* and the ways in which Darío, Martí, Whitman, and their predecessors dealt with its generative and uncreative potential in their poetics, as is seen in his binary of *hiperia* and *imitatio*, result in reductionist and misleading understandings of their notions of poesis in general, especially in the case of

[60] Although realism as a stylistic method that emerged in the nineteenth century is understood as descriptively representing the empirical world by renouncing imagination, here, for lack of a more appropriate term, it is used as multifariously and imaginatively denoting and connoting through inventions and rearrangements its underlying concept, that is, reality.

Darío. As we shall see, Darío, Dickinson, Whitman, and Martí grasped the "invisible causalities" articulated by their predecessors, kept their precursors' metamorphosis going, and passed on the liberatory fire to the future by producing directional causalities that modernized poetic discourse in the hemisphere and deflected the conservatism that prevailed in their culture and developing modern literary traditions.

In "José Martí en el eje de la modernización poética: Whitman, Lautréamont, Rimbaud" (1983), Ángel Rama argued that the process of literary modernization in Spanish America was marked by "internacionalización," or the opening to world culture and literature he noted in Martí and other American authors such as Eugenio de Hostos, Manuel González Prada, and Baldomero Sanín Cano, and by "esa energía animal, instintiva, y sin freno" expressed by Martí, Darío, Whitman, and the French poets (97, 112; "internationalization"; "that animal, instinctive, and unrestrained energy"). Likewise, in *Darío y el modernismo* (1970), Rama claimed that Darío possessed a "mayor examen del problema de la integración en una cultura universal" or "una mayor precisión acerca de la esfera en que debía producirse la novación autonómica" (Rama qtd. in Ballón 136; "a major understanding of the problem of integration in a universal culture"; "a major accuracy regarding the sphere in which the autonomic transformation had to occur"). In his view, Darío pursued the same goal

> a que tendieron los últimos neoclásicos y primeros románticos de la época de la independencia: la autonomía poética de la América española como parte del proceso general de libertad continental, lo que significaba establecer un orbe cultural propio que pudiera oponerse al español materno, con una implícita aceptación de esta nueva literatura en el conglomerado mayor de la civilización europea, que tenía sus raíces en el mundo grecolatino. (Rama qtd. in Ballón 135)
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> [that the last neoclassic writers and the first romantics of the time of independence pursued: the poetic autonomy of Spanish America as part of the general process

> of continental freedom. This implied the establishment of their own cultural world that could oppose the Spanish maternal world, and an implicit acceptance of this new literature in the major composite of the European civilization that had its roots in the Greco-Roman world.]

Indeed, Darío was a successor of the continental project of emancipation that neoclassic and romantic American poets such as Emerson, Bello, and Echeverría advanced. These poets dealt with issues of cultural integration, cultural colonial hegemony and national and continental identity, building the foundations of a modern "orbe cultural propio" that rejected neither Europe's nor the world's cultural legacy.

As the Guatemalan author and Nobel Laureate Miguel Ángel Asturias (1899-1974) noted with regard to the works of Andrés Bello, in the writings of these poets we observe the beginning of the "diálogo de la literatura americana en el plano universal" (Asturias qtd. in Iván Jaksic 18; "dialogue between American and world literature"; Jaksic xvi). They not only re-cognized the filiation of the incipient modern American literature to Western literature and the pressing need of critically using the past, influences, and the present in their poesis, but also crystallized their contribution in this process of cultural, economic, and geo-political reconfiguration by inscribing America in the world as a continent on its own rather than as an appendix of Europe. Although neither of these poets elaborated notions of world literature, the opening to the world and its literatures that surface in their works gave gravity to a notion of modern American literature that prioritized the local, as they expected it to be adequate to recreate and sing the Americas, and that also welcomed the world and its contributions. Mariano Siskind in *Cosmopolitan Desires: Global Modernity and World Literature in Latin America* (2014), which examines formations of world literary discourse in modernist authors, including

Darío and Martí, from 1882 to 1925, draws our attention to different ideas of the "world" produced in their writings. He argues that, whether "the world" meant France, an overall idea of transatlantic and Mediterranean relations they identified as Europe or the West, "or a vaguely defined space of conceptual universality dominated but not exhausted by European or Western culture," the world or "this signifier of exteriority" represented "a blank screen upon which cosmopolitan writers projected their aesthetic desires and their longing of participating in the actualization of modernity" (8).

This oscillation between an idea of the "world" that implies Europe, or rather Western Europe, and a space that in tension with the European cultural hegemony exceeds it, is noticeable not only in Martí, Darío, Whitman, and Dickinson, but also in poets like Echeverría, Heredia, and Chapman, who mainly gravitated toward a notion of the "world" that implied Western Europe, and Emerson and Bello whose "world" exceeded Europe and intended to reach around the globe. The "world" for Bello, Emerson, and Echeverría seems to have several meanings. On the one hand, it signifies a source of cultural enrichment that was essential for the process of modernization and decolonization, which in turn brings to the fore issues of combination in relation to imitation and originality, translation and transformation.[61] On the other hand, it represents

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[61] In this regard, David Watson discusses the relation between the national and world literary formations in Emerson's writings, highlighting the significance of translation among the New England transcendentalists and how for this community of intellectuals and translators "translations signal transnational continuities but are reframed within nationalists projects" (212). Watson claims that Emerson makes the act of translation "almost invisible in favour of the unattributed content of translated texts," and that he creates, in the poet's words, a "particular language" or an "impersonal voice" that contains the original author and the translator, and that dispenses with "national or linguistic differences in recognition of the absolute translatability of experiences across time" (213). As the re-examination of nineteenth-century literature that the transnational

a conceptual space where they inscribed their aspirations of inclusion in the making of modernity and the world, and a means to confront colonialism and cultural hegemony so as to achieve the intellectual and cultural emancipation in the hemisphere. The turn to the world and its literatures in the works of these poets did not imply a detachment of the local and, rather, it appears to be instrumental to its needs of modernization and renovation, which we also note in Martí, Whitman, Dickinson, and Darío.

Along this line, Rama pointed to the emergence of discourses about the literatures of the world in Spanish America with Martí's chronicle about Oscar Wilde's visit to New York in 1882 during his tour in the United States. According to Rama, Martí furthered the then current internationalism by expanding the "horizonte universal de la cultura" as a means to oppose imperialism and cultural hegemony, thus, signaling "internacionalización, como vía adecuada para alcanzar la libertad y un más alto grado de soberanía intelectual, [la cual] se constituiría en adelante en el principio rector de la cultura latinoamericana" (97; "universal horizon of culture"; "internationalization, as an adequate way to achieve freedom and a higher level of intellectual sovereignty, [which] from then on would become the ruling principle of Latin American culture"). Yet, as Siskind argues, "internationalization" "was by no means the 'principio rector' according to which the *modernistas* (except for Gómez Carrillo and Sanín Cano) imagined the path to modernity" (113). In addition, as Siskind claims, "[w]orld literature, understood as a radical universalism and an antiparticularistic position, is admittedly a secondary road" with regards to the Latin American, Pan-Latinist, and Hispanic cultural filiations that

turn in U.S. literary criticism has brought forth, world literary discourses were early welcomed by authors like Emerson, Margaret Fuller, Edgar Allan Poe, and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Spanish American authors primarily developed (105). As we also observe in Martí's forebears, and though his works reflect a *de facto* interest in the literatures of the world, the opening to the world and its literatures in his writings appears neither as a dominant concern nor as the "ruling principle" of the struggle for intellectual and cultural freedom in late nineteenth-century Spanish America. Rama, however, rightly pointed to the instrumentalization of the "internationalization" for decolonizing and emancipatory purposes by Martí. Like in their predecessors, the turn to the world in Martí, Dickinson, Whitman, and even in Darío, does not represent a means to detach from the local. Discourses about "internationalization" in their works seem to play strategic functions that were directly related to the needs and designs of the localities in which our poets felt rooted and accountable, whether they signified actual territorial places or imagined spaces.

In Ballón's view however, Rama "no resuelve la intrínseca ilogicidad de la premisa: el 'orbe cultural propio' es al mismo tiempo nutrido y sostenido por el ajeno, transatlántico, 'de la civilización europea,'" revealing in this contradiction that "*la autonomía de la voz americana se proclama mediante una genial imitación de la estética francesa*" (136; "does not solve the inherent illogicality of the premise: 'their own cultural world' is at the same time nourished and supported by the foreign, trans-Atlantic, 'of the European civilization'"; "*the autonomy of the American voice is proclaimed through a brilliant imitation of the French aesthetic*"). Therefore, he attempts to solve this paradox with his binary between *hiperia* and *imitatio*, or by aligning Darío's preference for French literature with *imitatio* and juxtaposing it to Martí's anti-colonial and *hipérica* poetics. Rama highlighted Martí's neologism *hiperia* as indicating a

hemispheric poetics of vision, which for the critic indicated the existence of two oppositional writing practices. On the one hand, there were poets like Emerson, Whitman, and Martí, who manifested a visionary ability, "pues manejaban una poesía de conocimiento global y eran capaces de percibir la macroestructura de la realidad" and, on the other hand, there were poets that imitated and pleased themselves in subjectivism and conventionalism (Rama 108; "since they had a global knowledge of poetry and were able to perceive the macrostructure of reality"). From this argument Ballón concludes that whereas the first group of poets convey an emancipated look that directs the process of creation toward the future, "Darío y los modernistas aplican un enfoque *retrovisor* que no aboga por desuncir la visión poética ni la dicción hispanoamericanas porque la voluntad de estilo *mimetiza* la estética francesa moderna" (Ballón 280; "Darío and the modernists use a retrospective approach that strives neither to unyoke the poetic vision nor the Spanish American diction because the will of the style *imitates* the modern French aesthetic"). Nevertheless, in so arguing, he disregards not only the entanglements among imitation, "internationalization," and *ars combinatoria* in Darío's poesis, as well as in the poesis of the visionary poets, but also the fact that the poetic look of all these poets was futuristic and retrospective, utopian and radical, and more complex than the dichotomous binarism that Ballón attributes to the critical diagnostics of Rama.

In his discussion of Martí's notion of *hifesia* or *hiperia*, as he later named it,[62] Ballón states that *hiperia* "connota la fusión de ver y escribir como *irrupción súbita*," a

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[62] Ballón focuses on Martí's draft of his essay "Emerson," "fragmento número 258" and "fragmento 196- Mi libro. Emerson. – Carlyle. – Motley. –el perfecto Motley, Longfellow, el sereno Longfellow y Walt Whitman –Adamiano."

gravitational force that, as it is illustrated in "Fragment 196," enables us to see how "las ideas magma, después de surgir dispersas se imantan y ascienden corporizadas ante los ojos del escritor," or how the poet unifies "lo uno y lo múltiple, 'el yo y lo que no es yo'" through the analogy (280; "the magma-like ideas, after emerging scattered magnetize themselves and rise embodied to the eyes of the writer"; "the one and the multiple, 'the I and that which is not me"). Hence, he asserts that

> *imitación* aunque es por definición contraria a la originalidad, lo que aquí vivamente denota es una carencia substancial de *hiperia*, o sea, la desactivación de una potencia poética. De acuerdo con ello, por defecto, por su limitada capacidad visual, por la estrechez *retrovisora* de su ángulo de visión, los poetas no *hipéricos* están *menos* dispuestos a percibir la unidad del cosmos y, *menos aún*, el eje común sobre el que revuelven la literatura y el presente histórico. (282)
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> [though *imitation* is by definition in opposition to originality, what it vividly denotes here is a substantial lack of *hiperia*, that is, the deactivation of a poetic power. According to this, by default, due to its limited visual capacity, the *retrospective* narrowness of its angle of vision, the non-*hipéricos* poets are *less* disposed to perceive the unity of the cosmos and, *even less so*, the common axis upon which literature and the historic present revolve.]

As Ballón notes, Martí's *hiperia* conflates a notion of vision and writing that indicates an anti-mimetic approach to poetry. His neologism suggests a different way of seeing and writing that is akin to those proposed by Emerson and Whitman, and that is anti-mimetic in his rejection of descriptive poetry. However, as the works of our poets make apparent, they not only engaged with their historic present and explored the correspondences with the universe using the analogy, but also sought ways to supersede neoclassic and romantic notions of poesis. Martí's, Whitman's, Dickinson's, and Darío's writings designate a tense coexistence between neoclassicism and romanticism that can be seen in

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their conflation and transformations of notions of these aesthetics, as well as in their use or rejection of Parnassianism and Symbolism.

Though at some point Ballón contends that Darío reoriented his aesthetic classicism toward the *hiperia* passed on by Emerson via Martí through Emerson's idea of "whim"[63] after the Spanish-American War, he for the most part qualifies as a non-*hipérico* poet.[64] From his perspective, Darío's poetics radically differed from Martí's in his servile "*americanismo celeste*" and "el inocultable raquitismo estético resultante del *descentrado mimetismo grafolátrico contra andino* del escritor centroamericano (123; "*sky-blue Americanism*"; "the unconcealable meager aesthetic that results from the *decentered, grafolátrico*, *and counter-Andean mimetism* of the Central American writer"). In his contextualization of the *imitatio*, Ballón recounts that the word in the

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[63] Drawing from Lawrence Buell's understanding of Emerson's "whim" in his study *Emerson* (2004), Ballón highlights the Cervantine origin of the image of the rider and his horse as symbolizing a wild energy or instinct in his translation of Emerson's essay "The Poet." Therefore, he states that when this instinct in Emerson relates to a "volición espontánea, está asociado a *whim* ("Self-Reliance [La soberanía propia]" 1841). El vocablo implica estar en el mundo en *desacato instintivo-animal* … Representa el libre albedrío del ciudadano inmerso en un entorno democrático capaz de proferir al máximo su emancipación intelectual" (250; "spontaneous will is associated to *whim*"; "the term implies being in the world in an *instinctive-animalistic disobedience* … It represents the free will of the citizen that is involved in a democratic environment in which he is able to express his intellectual emancipation to the maximum"). This image of the rider and the horse with its "*Whim* (Capricho/corazonada/pálpito/ impulso) o poética del *desacato*," then, (re)appears in Martí's "Prólogo" to "El poema el Niágara" (1882) by the Venezuelan poet Juan Antonio Pérez Bonalde and in some of his poems as signifying "la relación dinámica caballo-lenguaje-pensamiento" (229; "*Whim* (Caprice/premonition/ feeling /impulse or a poetics of *disobedience*"; "the dynamic relationship horse-language-thought").

[64] Ballón traces Darío's explicit mentions of the term *whim* [*capricho*] in his writings, noting that he used it for the first time in "Versos de Martí" (1895), and after 1900 several times explicitly relating it to Emerson and Martí, which seems to explain to him Darío's shift toward *hiperia* or toward "un americanismo que sintetiza el ávido antimimetismo de la visión estética" after the Spanish-American war (373, 375, 33; "an Americanism that synthesizes the keen anti-mimetism of the aesthetic vision").

Grand Dictionnaire Universel, which was a mandatory source for authors and intellectuals in Europe and America by that time, is defined as "la fuente más fecunda de la literatura" and a "flagelo" (44; "the most fertile source of literature"; "curse"). This contradictory character of the *imitatio*, or its positive and negative potential, resurfaces throughout his revision of the word. However, instead of considering the implications of this aporia in the poesis of the poets he addresses, he rather places Darío as adhering to European hegemonic notions of the *imitatio* and dismissing the turn toward originality that permeated the nineteenth century (Ballón 49-52).

Poets like Emerson, Bello, and Echeverría were aware of the aporetic nature of imitation; hence, they rejected servile imitation or imitation per se and endorsed the *ars combinatoria* and the critical and innovative use of the past and the present in ways that upheld the poets' freedom to choose, combine, appropriate, and transform the cultural legacies available to them. These poets offered a productive way to prevent the *imitatio* from becoming a "curse" and to make progress in the realization of a cultural and intellectual hemispheric autonomy. As Darío's witty and ironic response to Paul Groussac (1848-1929) and other critics that condemned him for imitating the French poets shows, his notion of imitation not only converges with that of his American predecessors, but also indicates his filiation with the critical inter-American poetic tradition that poets such as Bello, Emerson, Echeverría, Whitman, Martí and Dickinson, among others, animated during the nineteenth century. In "*Los raros* por Rubén Darío" (1896) ["*The Misfits* by Rubén Darío"], Groussac harshly criticized the poet's "mental Gallicism" and asserted that "[e]l arte americano será original – o no será. ¿Piensa el señor Darío que su literatura alcanzará dicha virtud con ser el eco servil de rapsodias

parisienses y tomar por divisa la pregunta ingenua de un personaje de Coppée: '[*q*]*ui pourrais-je imiter pour être original?*'" (478; "[t]he American art will be original – or it will not be. Does Mr. Darío think that his literature will reach such virtue by being the servile echo of Parisian rhapsodies and considering as an ideal the naïve question of one of Coppée's characters: '[*w*]*hom shall I be able to imitate to be original?*'").

Darío responded in "Los colores del estandarte" (1896) ["The Colors of my Standard"] by defending his view on imitation and poesis as follows, "[*q*]*ui pourrais-je imiter pour être original?* me decía yo. Pues a todos. A cada cual le aprendía lo que me agradaba, lo que cuadraba a mi sed de novedad y a mi delirio de arte; los elementos que constituirían después un medio de manifestación individual. Y el caso es que resulté original" (121; "[w]hom can I imitate in order to be original? I asked myself. Why, everyone. From each I took what I liked, what suited my thirst of novelty and my delirium for art: the elements that would go on to constitute a medium of personal expression. And it turned out to be original"; Hurley 485). His reply to Groussac demonstrates that he understood that the possibility of attaining originality was inextricably related to the *ars combinatoria*, the critical use of the past and influences, and the individual genius, on the one hand. And, on the other hand, that he rebelled against the pressures to subject his work to insularism, nationalism, and cultural homogeneity that criticism attempted to impose on him. As Beatriz Colombi also notes, Darío "invierte todas las observaciones, desde el galicismo mental hasta la frase de Coppée" (80; "subverts all his observations, from the mental Gallicism to Coppée's phrase"). However, Ballón insists that in *Azul* (1888) [*Blue*] and *Prosas profanas y otros poemas* (1896) [*Profane Prose and Other Poems*] Darío lacked the *hiperia* and

disobedience that Emerson and Martí conveyed and, consequently, that his answer to Groussac, once again, exposes his insurmountable mimetic leanings (79).

To further his argument, Ballón brings forth Groussac's perspectives on the debate about originality and imitation via Darío in "*Prosas profanas* por Rubén Darío" (1897) ["*Profane Prose* by Rubén Darío"], which highlights the critic's dismissal of the possibility of "originalidad intelectual" in America and his view of Darío's aesthetics as exotic and "provisionalmente estéril" (Groussac qtd. in Ballón 155 156; "intellectual originality"; "temporarily sterile"). Yet, in this essay, Groussac also admitted that "se comete un abuso de doctrina al formular en absoluto, el reproche de imitación europea, contra cualquier escrito o artista nacido en este continente" (Groussac 158; "there is a doctrinal abuse, when the reproach of European imitation against any writing or artist born in this continent is stated as an absolute"). He thus acknowledged that his argument about Darío "no es del todo exacto," since *Prosas profanas* represented a contribution to the enrichment of the poetic language as well (Ibid; "is not entirely accurate"). In his words, "[e]n la fina labor de esas *Prosas*, profanas o místicas, se cumple un esfuerzo que no será pura pérdida, como no lo es el de los decadentes franceses; me refiero al *assouplissement* de los ritmos y al enriquecimiento evidente de la lengua poética" (Ibid; "in the fine work of those *Prose*, profane or mystical, there is a goal achieved that will not be a complete loss, as it is the case with the French decadents; I talk about the *loosening* of the rhythms and the evident enrichment of the poetic language"). Similarly, and despite Groussac's refusal of ideas of cultural hybridity with Europe, his comment about Darío's use of influences and the past underscores the success of his combinatorial play as follows, "son muy numerosas las resonancias que convergen en su inspiración;

pasa tanta gente por su camino que las huellas se confunden y, como decimos los arrieros el rastro está 'borrado'" (159; "the resonances that converge in his inspiration are too numerous; so many people pass by his way that the footprints become indistinguishable and, as we, the muleteers, say: the trail is 'erased'").[65]

By echoing Emerson's ideas about originality, "all originality is relative. Every thinker is retrospective," and "that in a large sense, one would say there is no pure originality. All minds quote," Ballón, yet forgetting to quote him, concludes that "[l]a originalidad hemisférica no existe en estado puro; es una cuestión *relativa*, *de grado*, cuyo mejor impulso contra-hegemónico en el siglo XIX confronta la imitación europea desde Nueva Inglaterra" (Emerson 4: 198; 8: 178; Ballón 152; "[t]he hemispheric originality does not exist in a pure state; it is a *relative* question, *of degree*, whose best counter-hegemonic impulse in the XIX century confronts the European imitation from New England"). We certainly agree with the claim that "pure" originality in America, or elsewhere, is untenable; yet, this does not mean that originality cannot be achieved. As Martí stated, "[t]odo está dicho ya; pero las cosas, cada vez que son sinceras, son nuevas. Confirmar es crear. Lo que hace crecer el mundo no es descubrir cómo está hecho, sino el esfuerzo de cada uno para descubrirlo" (1: 802; "[e]verything has been already said; but every time things are sincere, they are new. To confirm is to create. What makes the

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[65] Likewise, yet acknowledging the relevance of Darío's *ars combinatoria* in the production of originality, the Chilean poet and journalist Eduardo de la Barra (1839-1900), in his prologue to the first edition of *Azul*, noted that Darío merged "estilos y temperamentos muy diversos, mas nuestro autor de todos ellos tiene rasgos y no es ninguno de ellos. Ahí precisamente está su originalidad" (de la Barra qtd. in Juan Loveluck 214; "styles and personalities very diverse, and though our author has traits of all of them he is none of them. It is precisely there that we find his originality").

world grow is not to discover how it is made, but the effort each one makes to discover it"). Originality can thus be accomplished in the poetic effort everyone makes to discover the world; however, to succeed and make that this discovery becomes an original poetic act in Martí's view, the poetic act has to sincerely convey the emotion of the instant in which the world revealed itself to the image-maker.

Now, whether New England (or, rather, Emerson, in Ballón's view) produced "the best" expression of this continental "counter-hegemonic impulse" in the nineteenth century or not is a discussion that grounded on this term contributes to reify, yet again, exceptionalist and hierarchical notions of literature in the Americas. The colors of Darío's poetic standard show not only his fervent defense of individual freedom and sovereignty to create and his view of imitation in poesis, but also his understanding of modern American poetry as a worldly and polyvocal expression that is configured by its historic becoming and a critical recombination of literary influences, cultures, and knowledges that the poet whimsically uses to embellish his "eclosiones autóctonas," as he later made explicit in his commentary of *Prosas profanas* in "Historia de mis libros" (1909) ["History of my Books"] (*OC* 207; "autochthonous productions"; Hurley 383).[66] Darío's, Dickinson's, Martí's, and Whitman's poetics reflect their kinship with the inter-American poetic tradition of radicalism and dissent we examine in this study, and a renovation of its critical thought. Yet, as we shall see in what follows, the fire of freedom

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[66] Along this line, Mariano Siskind in "Sarmiento, Darío y Borges: o el dilema de las modernidades marginales" (2009) argues that Darío resignifies Sarmiento's imitation per se of European modernity by turning it into "una imitación creativa" or into a translation in Borges's terms, that is, as a "práctica que reconoce una opacidad impenetrable entre lenguas y contextos culturales, y entonces adquiere la forma de una reescritura" (200; "a creative imitation;" "practice that acknowledges an impenetrable opacity among languages and cultural contexts, and therefore that it acquires the form of a rewriting").

that drove their efforts to emancipate and modernize poetic discourse in the Americas blazed distinctively in their poetry.

CELESTIAL LIGHTNING BOLTS: TO CREATE!

As the first poetic offspring of our "children of the fire," to evoke differentially Octavio Paz's *Children of the Mire*, Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* (*LOG*, 1855)[67] conveys well the democratic and libertarian ethos that continued to mobilize our poets' explorations of freedom in democracy and in poetic creation after the 1850s. In his preface to *LOG* (1855), Whitman outlined his poetic project and notions about the modern(ist) poet that in characterizing him as one who "never stagnates. Obedience does not master him, he masters it" and as "the voice and exposition of liberty" apply to all our poets (9, 17). Like Whitman, Dickinson, Martí, and Darío rebelled against stagnation and "the coloniality of power" of their modernities, calling for freedom and exercising it in their poesis. Our "children of the fire," like "the greatest poet[s]" were supposed to do in Whitman's view, brought "neither cessation, or sheltered fatness and ease" (24). Darío, who outlived all our poets, envisioned himself as a liberator of the form and the leader of Spanish and Spanish American modernism, using the term for the first time in 1890. Though a pungent fragrance of neoclassicism and the French cultural hegemony that existed in nineteenth-century South America pervades *Azul* and *Prosas profanas*, these books of poetry also evince his commitment to the modernization of the Spanish American poetic discourse, which the poet allegedly carried out through the

[67] Unless otherwise specified, I use Whitman's last edition of *Leaves of Grass* (1891-1892).

transformation, incorporation, and combination of his knowledge of the classics, of European and American modern literature, as well as of the Spanish, French, Latin, Italian, and English languages. If *Azul* manifests Darío's cosmopolitanism and explorations of rhythm, verbal harmony, and musical transposition, *Prosas profanas* consolidates his quests in a poetic project that stoked the fire of creation by advocating for "una estética acrática" (*PC* 471; "an anarchic esthetic"; Acereda and Derusha 111).

In "Palabras liminares" ["Liminal Words"], or the anti-manifesto that prologues *Prosas profanas*, Darío passed on the fire of freedom that animated his views about poetry and poesis, articulating a critical dialogue with the past and the present that exposes affinities and divergences with his predecessors and contemporaries. His "anarchic aesthetics" not only refused servile imitation and the imposition of molds, but also eschewed hegemonic notions of progress, democracy, and literature, since "[s]i hay poesía en nuestra América, ella está en las cosas viejas … Lo demás es tuyo, demócrata Walt Whitman" (*PC* 472; "[i]f there is poetry in our America, it is in the old things … The rest is yours, democrat Walt Whitman"; 113). Darío and Whitman, however, coincided in rejecting imitation. Whereas Whitman in *Leaves of Grass* claimed that "[h]e most honors my style who learns under it to destroy the teacher," Darío encouraged the youth to not imitate by stating "[y]o no tengo literatura "mía"… mi literatura es *mía* en mí; quien siga servilmente mis huellas perderá su tesoro personal," and by echoing Wagner's advice to his disciple Augusta Holmes: "'[l]o primero, no imitar a nadie, y, sobre todo, a mí'" (242; *PC* 471; "[I] have no literature that is 'mine'… my literature is *mine* in me; whoever obsequiously follows in my footsteps will lose his personal treasure"; "[f]irst of all, imitate no one, and least of all me"; 111). Likewise, Martí in his

poem "La poesía es sagrada…" ["Poetry is Sacred…"] of *Versos libres* [*Free Verses*] (1913) claimed "[l]a poesía es sagrada. Nadie / De otro la tome, sino en sí" (2: 1403; "[p]oetry is sacred, no one should take it / from another but only from within").

Uncritical imitation or imitation per se was spurned by all our poets; hence, like Martí argued in "Nuestra América" (1891) "la salvación está en crear. Crear es la palabra de pase de esta generación," Darío proclaimed creation as the poets' first and only commandment: "[y] la primera ley, creador: crear" (2:110; *PC* 472; "salvation lies in creating. Create is this generation's password"; Esther Allen 294; "[a]nd the first rule, creator: create"; Acereda and Derusha 115). Dickinson was not less categorical and eloquent in her endorsement of creation and freedom in poesis. As her poem 583 (1863) reads,

> [y]ou cannot put a Fire out –
>
> A Thing that can ignite
>
> Can go, itself, without a Fan –
>
> Opon the slowest night –
>
> You cannot fold a Flood
>
> And put it in a Drawer –
>
> Because the Winds would find it out –
>
> And tell your Cedar Floor –"   (Fr583)

Though Dickinson actually folded the "Flood" of her poems into her drawers, she juxtaposes symbols and images of interiority and exteriority that disrupt logical thinking in order to emphasize the futility of restraining the fire of freedom, creation, and imagination, since they are a latent *potens*, or a power and possibility, as José Lezama

Lima would say, that, like the natural and sovereign power of floods and fire, can overflow and flare up “[o]pon the slowest Night” and “Winds.” Similarly, in her metapoetic poem “Dare you see a Soul *at the White heat?* (1862),[68] we find a Lezamian image that fixates her call for freedom in poetic creation through a striking depiction of the act of forging (Fr401). In her words,

> Dare you see a Soul *at the White heat?*
> Then crouch within the door –
> Red - is the Fire’s common tint –
> But when the vivid Ore
> Has vanquished Flame’s conditions,
> It quivers from the Forge
> Without a color, but the light
> Of unannointed Blaze.
> Least Village has it’s Blacksmith
> Whose Anvil’s even ring
> Stands symbol for the finer forge
> That soundless tugs – within –
> Refining these impatient Ores
> With Hammer, and with Blaze
> Until the Designated Light
> Repudiate the Forge – (Fr401)

[68] This poem had three variants A, B, and C, however, version B is lost; here, I use version A.

In dialogue with Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's popular poem "The Village Blacksmith" (1840), Dickinson challenges us, as the word "dare" indicates, to witness the process of poetic creation *at the White heat* by crouching "within the door" with the same curiosity with which the "children coming home from school / Look in at the open door /…to see the flaming forge" (Longfellow 66). Though she "keep[s] the secret" or omits whence she obtained her "wondrous booty" or the "ores," as she also does in the poem "I never told the buried gold," she nonetheless invites us to watch their transformation into a useful artifact, that is, the poem (Fr38).

We thus see how the fire of imagination in its "common tint" engages in a battle with the "ore," the "soul," or the ideas and thoughts words bear. Once the "vivid ore" has defeated the "Flame's conditions," that is to say, when the words have been refined by the poet, or as Martí argued when in going to the roots of the words, the poet strips them of the "capa que las envuelve, que es el uso," we are able to see them "[w]ithout a color, but the light / Of unannointed Blaze" or "brillantes como el oro, ligeras como el ala, sólidas como el mármol" (Martí, "Cuaderno de apuntes nro. 5" in Marlen A. Domínguez Hernández 54; "clothing that wraps them up, which is the usage"; "brilliant like gold, light like a wing, and solid like marble"). Whereas Helen Vendler considers the poem as a "refashioning of the Christian narrative of God's chastening purgation of the soul" and stresses that her choice of the word "unannointed" implies a challenge of "the authoritative divine appointing" (183, 181), Lorene M. Birden's discussion brings critical views about the light in Dickinson's poesis, stating that while "her poems of observation require the chiaroscuro effect of dimmed light, she calls on the violence of full flame to render a poem, and therefore to describe that creative process" (88). The ores'

"unannointed Blaze," therefore, represents not only an assertion of unbridled freedom in poesis, but also an expression of rebellion that "dismisses entirely all nostalgia for official 'anointing'" or that rejects the authority, conventions, and perspectives institutionalized and enforced by literary traditions (Vendler 181). As the poet declares elsewhere,

> [i]f the foolish, call them "*flowers*"
> Need the wiser, *tell?*
> If the Savans "Classify" them
> It is just as well!" (Fr179)

The state of "unannointed" incandescence reached by the "vivid ore" in its victory over the refining flame signals a crucial moment in the poem, as it anticipates the beginning of forging. However, the fact that the "unannointed Blaze" "quivers from the Forge" reminds us, once more, of Dickinson's "poetics of compression, polysemy, and optional interpretive choices," or of her distinctive ways to make us participants in the act of creation by demanding that we exercise our individual freedom and sovereignty so as to choose out of the possibilities the poem offers and make our own interpretations (Jed Deppman 62). As the polysemy of "the forge" summons meanings of the word "forge," such as furnace, to make, shape, imitate, and falsify, as well as its colloquial usage as a metonymical phrase, we find two interpretive threads. On the one hand, the poem suggests to us that the unrestrainable power of imagination and freedom to create, as symbolized in the "unannointed Blaze," quivers or fears from "the Forge" because the latter not only "[s]tands symbol" of the act of poetic creation, but also of the violence involved in it, as the "Hammer" or language's rules and constraints will attempt to subject the "unannointed Blaze" to shape during the forging. On the other hand, the

"unannointed Blaze" can also quiver from "the Forge" or from the craftiness that imitation rather than creation brings about.

Joining Longfellow's commendation of "The Village Blacksmith," Dickinson highlights and praises the importance of the smiths' and poets' role in society as makers, whose useful and necessary craft, as the Greek term *poesis* implies, makes them "[s]tand[s] symbol for the finer Forge" (Fr401). As her poem 446 asserts, the poet "…is That / [who] Distills amazing sense / From Ordinary Meanings – /," or the one inside of whom the "soundless tugs" vibrate during the process of refining and shaping of the vivid and "impatient Ores" (Fr446). To obtain "amazing sense," however, requires "Hammer" and "Blaze," which will inevitably engage in a violent struggle "[u]ntil the Designated Light" is attained. Birden contends that "[r]epudiate the Forge" "constitutes the liberation of the will to create in, through, and by the thing created;" yet, if to do so implies the need of "the Forge," then, why is it being repudiated? (89). As her "finer" craft and this poem further demonstrate, Dickinson often manipulates and transgresses syntax in her poetry, and "repudiate" is the only verb that remains unconjugated in the poem. In effect, its infinitive form disrupts the grammatical link with "the Designated Light," forcing an unconventional association and producing interpretive choices that bring forth her paradoxical last line as a direct address that commands us to "[r]epudiate the forge." While language contains the "ores" that the poet transforms into the poem, language also carries its own system of rules that constrains and, consequently, hammers out poesis. Her poem constitutes a poetic image that "participates in history" by cracking poetic discourse in order to introduce her "unannointed" and blazing statement of unbridled freedom in and as poesis. Her call to "repudiate the forge," then, stands as a rejection of

the “shaping” or “molding” that language’s normativity inflicts upon the writing process or on the poet’s forging, impacting and interfering with the attainment of the “Designated Light.” Dickinson thus crystallizes an epistemological “invisible causality” that proposes a notion of poesis as a counter-forging or as a creative and liberating endeavor, whose “soundless tugs” struggle to emancipate poetic language from the language’s rule by stretching and transgressing its rules.

INTER-AMERICAN MODERNIST POETRY AND THE WORLD: DISTINGUISHING SLANTS OF LIGHT

Dickinson, Whitman, Martí, and Darío confronted and challenged their literary traditions, aiming to emancipate poetry from its colonialism; yet, in so doing, they followed their own paths and created distinguishing poetic expressions and notions of poesis in the process. In “Palabras liminares,” Darío continues to interrogate and defy the Spanish American and the Spanish literary traditions. By identifying the latter as the past, as the old grandfather that shows portraits of distinguished authors of the Spanish Golden Age to the poet symbolizes, the poet (re)asserts a notion of Spanish American modern poetry as a transnational and critical expression. In his words,

> [é]ste, me dice, es el gran don Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, genio y manco; éste es Lope de Vega, éste Garcilaso, éste Quintana.” Yo le pregunto por el noble Gracián, por Teresa la Santa, por el bravo Góngora y el más fuerte de todos, don Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas. Después exclamo: ¡Shakespeare! ¡Dante! ¡Hugo…! (Y en mi interior: ¡Verlaine…!). (*PC* 472)
>
> [t]his one,” he tells me, “is the great Don Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, a one-armed genius; this one is Lope de Vega, this one Garcilaso, this one Quintana.” I ask him about the noble Gracián, about Theresa the Saint, about the courageous Góngora and the strongest of all, Don Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas. Then I exclaim: Shakespeare! Dante! Hugo…! (And in my heart: Verlaine…!).] (Acereda and Derusha 113)

In this way, Darío asked for a counter-culture and a poetic expression that embracing different literatures and their radical traditions categorically renounced to nationalist and provincial notions about poetry and poesis.

As we mentioned, Martí, Whitman, and Dickinson also welcomed the turn to the world and its literatures. Despite their fervent nationalism, Whitman and Martí sought ways to counterbalance it by embracing the world and its literatures. Not only did Whitman state in his preface to *LOG* (1855) that to the American poet "the other continents arrive as contributions," but in *Democratic Vistas* (1871) he also recognized in the literatures of the world a "model, combined, adjusted to other standards than America's, but of priceless value to her and hers" (7, 959). Whereas he attempted to subsume the world in his poem "Salut au Monde,"[69] later, in his essay "Poetry To-day in America – Shakespeare – The Future" (1881), he proposed to sing a "vaster, saner, more surrounding Comradeship, uniting closer and closer not only the American states, but all nations, and all humanity," asking his fellow poets "[w]hy not fix your verses henceforth to the gauge of the round globe? the whole race?" (1024). Imagining "new formulas" to do so, he offered his "international poems" or poems that were to rely on "the invisible root out of which the poetry deepest in, and dearest to humanity grows, [that] is Friendship. I have thought that in both patriotism and song (even amid their grandest shows past) we have adhered too long to petty limits, and that the time has come to enfold the world" (1025). Along this line, Martí in his chronicle about Oscar Wilde (1882) stated, "parece que las fronteras de nuestro espíritu son las de nuestro lenguaje …

[69] This poem was initially published in the second edition of *LOG* (1856) as "Poem of Salutation," taking its current title in 1860.

[c]onocer diversas literaturas es el medio mejor de libertarse de la tiranía de alguna de ellas; así como no hay manera de obedecer ciegamente a un sistema filosófico, sino nutrirse en todos" (1: 935; "it seems that the frontiers of our spirit are those of our language … [t]o know diverse literatures is the best means to free oneself from the tyranny of some of them; just like there is no way to blindly obey one philosophical system, but rather to strengthen oneself with them all"). Later, in "Nuestra América," the poet asserted the cultural difference and independence of Spanish America, favoring an opening to the world and its cultures by claiming: "[i]njértese en nuestras Repúblicas el mundo; pero el tronco ha de ser el de nuestras Repúblicas" (2: 108; "[l]et the world be grafted onto our republics, but the trunk must be our own"; Randall et al. 88).

Admittedly, this openness to the world and its literatures is not as explicit in Dickinson, as it is in our male poets. Critics, however, have noted not only that she "availed herself of cultural opportunities from Europe" and remained connected to the national and transnational actuality through her local social circles and the newspapers (Jane Donahue 35), but also that she alluded to countries like Norway, Japan, Brazil, Italy, Jamaica, and Russia in letters and poems (Domhnall Mitchell and Maria Stuart 1). Such references compose a transnational imaginary that as we find in her poem 118 (1859), "[t]alk with prudence to a Beggar / Of "Potosi," and the mines!," also includes Bolivia (Fr118). Paul Giles argues that "the deeper significance of Dickinson's global consciousness lies in the way she represents the Earth in cosmic and scientific terms, as a self-regulating machine" that we observe in her depictions of "the rotation of the globe, the migration of birds, the passage of the seasons" (9). Indeed, as critics have pointed out, scientific discourses had a significant impact on Whitman's, Martí's, and Dickinson's

works. According to Giles, Dickinson's overall knowledge about science and discourses about geology, evolution, and astronomy were crucial in her view of the earth in "terrestrial and geographical terms, rather than merely as a displaced form of transcendentalism," as well as in the elaboration of her antipodal outlook and "perspectival slant" (11, 14). The latter, he goes on, enabled the poet to see the globe and the transnational from a compressed angle of vision as "a way of highlighting the inherently prismatic slant presented to any given observer," and of decentering hierarchies (17). As Giles observes, in "The robin's my criterion for tune" (Fr256), the poet exposes "the inherently limited capacity of all geographical space" and "reinscribe[s] New England within a global circuit, where the rotation of the Earth renders all vantage points equally refractory" (18). Whether our poets' embrace of the world and its literatures responded to their efforts to confront, offset, or emancipate American poetry from nationalism, imperialism, cultural hegemony, and insularism, or to their recognition of the world as a "priceless" source of cultural enrichment and complementation, their ways of seeing the interrelations and tensions between the local and the global manifest directional causalities that offer distinct views of looking and knowing the world.

Like Emerson, Whitman and Martí devised an expansive angle of vision that correlated with their attempts to achieve the unity with the cosmos. As Martí stated in 1887, while stressing how Emerson "el veedor" and Edison "el mecánico" converged in their quest for the "unidad esencial," "[e]l universo es lo universo. Y lo universo es lo uni-vario, es lo vario en lo uno. La naturaleza, "llena de sorpresas", es toda una. Lo que hace un puñado de tierra, hace al hombre y hace al astro. Los elementos de una estrella

enfriada están en un grano de trigo" (*OC* (1963) 11: 164, 165; "the seer"; "the mechanic"; "essential unity"; "[t]he universe is universe. And what is universe, is uni-various, it is the various into the single. Nature, 'full of surprises,' is all one. What forms a fistful of earth makes humankind and the stars. The elements of a dead star are within a grain of wheat"). Martí and Whitman sought a dialectical synthesis or "the essential unity" in Nature and the cosmos. They saw themselves as forming the universal "grain of wheat" and their "Americas" as integrating both the West and the world. As Whitman manifested in 1881, "[y]ears ago I thought Americans ought to strike out separate, and have expressions of their own in highest literature. I think so still, and more decidedly than ever. But those convictions are now strongly temper'd by some additional points … I see that this world of the West, as part of all, fuses inseparably with the East, and with all, as time does" (1018).

Not only did our poets (re)inscribe the Americas in discourse, as integrating "the ever new, yet old human race– 'the same subject continued,'" but they also looked at the world from specific geopolitical and body-political epistemological locales that placed the local at the center of the poetic look (Whitman 1018). While Martí's poetic look appears to enfold the world from an angle of vision that, like Whitman's, aims to reach a synthesis and privileges the local, Whitman's gaze, animated by the manifest destiny of his imperial *unum*, goes further and attempts to fuse the local with the world, whether the local represents his America or his self, by becoming the world and blurring all boundaries. As "Salut au Monde" illustrates, "[w]ithin me latitude widens, longitude lengthens; / Asia, Africa, Europe, are to the east – America is provided for in the west" (287). Both poets articulate an expansive outlook that generates totalizing images of the

reality that subsume it through aggregation, or by merging and harmonizing its differences and contradictions. However, the dialectic between equality and difference that operates in Martí's writings insistently brings forth the recognition of differences and contradictions, even if it is to ironically engender new ones. Whitman's and Martí's ways of seeing the world, or "the not me," convey an epistemological orientation that, despite pointing toward the same direction, that is to say, to eliminate boundaries and differences, brought about distinct aesthetics in the process, as we shall soon discuss.

Unlike Martí, Whitman, and Dickinson, who consistently engaged with the local and privileged its actuality, Darío in *Azul* and *Prosas profanas* appears to partially detach from the local, understood as places and spaces that linked him to Nicaragua, his nations in America, and "Our America." The poet acknowledged the existence of a great poetic treasure "en nuestra épica prehistórica, en la conquista y aun en la colonia," as he stated by explaining his return to the past in *Prosas profanas* in "Historia de mis libros" (*OC* 206; "in our prehistoric times, in the Conquest, and even in the colony"; Hurley 383). But, he could not accept that the goal and poetic object of Spanish American modern poetry be limited to "la celebración de las glorias criollas, los hechos de la Independencia y la naturaleza americana: un eterno canto a Junín, una inacabable oda a la agricultura de la zona tórrida, y décimas patrióticas" (Ibid; "the celebration of *native* glories, the events of Independence, the American nature: an eternal hymn to Junín, an endless ode to the agriculture of the torrid zone, and stirring patriotic songs"; Ibid). Though his poetry in general evinces a coexistence between the local and the transnational that is disrupted in *Azul* and *Prosas profanas*, his partially universalist perspective in these books (since the local and its actuality intrude in several poems) does not posit "a limited particularized

universal, a French universal" as Siskind argues (188). Certainly, as Darío's profane confession stresses: "[a]buelo, preciso es decíroslo: mi esposa es de mi tierra; mi querida, de París," that is to say, despite his "marital filiation" or his bond with Spanish America, he also had an erotic, extra marital, relationship with France (*PC* 472; "[g]randfather, I have to tell you: the woman I married is from my native land: the woman I love, from Paris"; 113). However, his poetry underscores a view of the world that, though it exalts France's modernity and factually appears not to exceed Europe, it was not limited to France. In his efforts to modernize Spanish American poetic expression, Darío confronted the Spanish American literary tradition by delinking it and himself from the nation and "American nature," and by advocating for a transnational and cosmopolitan poetry. As a result, he conceived a poetic look that, favoring the foreign over the local and placing it as the vantage point, aspired to articulate a universal poetic expression for "Nuestra América."

In contrast to Whitman, Martí, and Darío, who, in one way or another, sought a dialectical synthesis with the cosmos in their poetry, Dickinson, as Magdalena Zapedowska also notes, rebelled against "the oppression of the One, the uniform, and the universal" (70). In so doing, she challenged totalizations and insisted on exposing the contradictions, reminding us that we "cannot solder an Abyss / with Air" (Fr647). While allegedly seeing "New Englandly," or from a perspective that was rooted and determined by the local, whether the local meant the United States, New England, Massachusetts, Amherst or her home, Dickinson cast an oblique and compressed look at the world that, instead of enfolding the various into the single and capturing it in its reflections, it aimed, rather, to project multiple its "slant[s] of light" (Fr256, 320). Though "[h]omeless at

home," the latter became Dickinson's observatory or the site whence she contemplated and reflected on the human experience from an angle of vision that "[b]etween my Curtain and the Wall" reveals "ample Crack[s]" whereby "[t]he Pattern of Chimney – / The Forehead of a Hill," seasonal change, and "[a] flippant fly opon the pane" concur in the creation of "[a]n altered look about" reality (Fr1603, 578, 90). Aiming to deflect our ways of knowing from unaltered perspectives or from the sameness produced by reflective, or mimetic, and expansive outlooks, Dickinson shifted her vision to a refractive and geometrical mode, which as if it were paradoxically attached to the motion of the globe attempts to move around and pass through the objects it focalizes so as to generate different viewpoints. Dickinson, Martí, Whitman, and Darío exercised their freedom to create, extract, transform, and whimsically combine the essences of the gardens of the world that were available to them. Their works engendered perspectival strategies that disclose epistemological reorientations that propose ways of seeing and grasping the world that not only unsettled the opposition between the particular and the universal, but that also resulted in different aesthetics.

CREATING DIFFERENT MODES OF THE MIMETIC: RUBÉN DARÍO'S CAPRICIOUS REALISM

While in "Versos de Martí" (1895) ["Martí's Verses"] Darío referred to "el ímpetu de su capricho" in his poetry for the first time, and later in "Dilucidaciones" ["Dillucidations"], which introduces *El canto errante* (1907) [*The Wandering Song*], he mentioned a "whim" to insist on the poet's individual sovereignty and freedom to create by directly relating it to Emerson, "whim" or "capricho" appears to have another

connotation in his works (656; *PC* 583; “the vigor of his whim”). Maria Schoina in *Romantic ‘Anglo-Italians:’ Configurations of Identity in Byron, the Shelleys, and the Pisan Circle* (2009) examines practices of acculturation and formations of identity in British romanticism by exploring affinities between Anglo-Italian cultural imaginaries. Schoina observes that “in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century, a significant part of the British cultural discourse registers the Anglo-Italian encounter in the form of hybridized spaces, identities, and narrative spaces” in which the *Capriccio* paintings and art expressions by Italian and English artists played a significant role (15). She argues that “[*c*]*apricci* or else *vedute ideate* [imagined views] are fantasy landscapes, composed of real buildings and places fancifully recombined or relocated” whereby the artist “lets his imagination – or memory – take control and mingles the real and the imagined” (42). In addition, Dario Succi signifies the *capriccio* mode as a “‘gioco virtuoso, ideal programme, enunciato iconico, sregolamento regolato’ (38) [Masterful game, ideal programme, iconic expression, regular irregularity], and underscores its importance as an ‘atto trasgresivo’ (15) [an act of transgression], an act that adheres to a code of configuration and to a poetics of metamorphosis (23)” (Succi qtd. in Schoina 42). The characterization of the *capriccio* that Schoina provides assists us in our discussion of Darío’s poesis, since as he stated in his commentary of *Cantos de vida y esperanza* [*Songs of Life and Hope*] (1905) in “Historia de mis libros” (1909) and critics have failed to notice and consider, he wrote “caprichos” in *Prosas profanas* (*OC* 214).

Whether Darío's interest in "caprichos" came from his knowledge of Italian culture and literature or from Francisco de Goya's *Los Caprichos*,[70] Darío, unlike Emerson who used the word "whim" mostly in his literal sense and in his essay "Self-reliance" to signify individual freedom and sovereignty, intentionally used the European tradition of "caprichos" as a means to "renovar el gusto y la forma y el vocabulario en nuestra poesía, encajonada en lo pedagógico-clásico, anquilosada de Siglo de Oro" (*OC* 214; "renovate the taste and forms and vocabulary in our poetry which had been straitened within the stiff pedagogical-poetics of the Renaissance"; Hurley 389). In this regard, Darío's last poem in *Prosas profanas* "Yo persigo una forma" ["I'm Hunting a Form"] stands out as a Lezamian image and colorful metapoetic "capricho" that concentrates central features of his modernist poetics. Written as a sonnet in Alexandrine verse or in lines of fourteen syllables, which was one of the metric innovations he introduced in the Spanish poetic tradition from French poetry, the poem opens declaring: "[y]o persigo una forma que no encuentra mi estilo, / botón de pensamiento que busca ser la rosa" (*PC* 525; "[i]'m hunting a form that my style can barely trace, / the budding of thought that wants to become a rose"; Greg Simon and Steven F. White 141). As the poet implies in the title of the poem and its placement at the end of his book, his efforts represent an ongoing quest not only for a poetic form that is ultimately unattainable since

[70] In 1799, Goya released *Los Caprichos* or a series of etchings that fancifully criticized social, political, and religious abuses in Spain by stimulating the artists' imagination. Charles Baudelaire deeply admired Goya's series and wrote a commentary that had a significant impact on the positive reception of the painter's work among romantic and symbolist artists. Similarly, in his notes on Goya (1879) Martí acknowledges Baudelaire's appreciation for Goya and too expresses his fascination with the painter's genius. Whether Darío knew about these poets' admiration for Goya or not, later, in his poem "A Goya" of *Cantos de vida y esperanza*, he also praised his capricious and alchemic palette.

form is in constant transformation, but also for an expression that instead of describing the poetic object, incarnates it, as the "botón de pensamiento que busca ser la rosa" suggests. The "rose" as a classical symbol of love, beauty, and perfection sets transformation in motion, as we see that "se anuncia con un beso que en mis labios se posa" to propose either a truncated love as "el abrazo imposible de la Venus de Milo" portrays, or the impossibility of language to create "una hermosura que está más allá de la belleza, algo que las palabras pueden evocar pero no decir" as Octavio Paz claimed in his essay "El caracol y la sirena" (1964) ["The Snail and the Siren"] (Ibid; "first it lands on my lips like a kiss, then it goes"; "to Venus de Milo's impossible embrace" Ibid; Paz 10; "a beauty that is beyond beauty itself, something words can evoke but not say").

As the chain of analogies continues to expand, we are transported from Greek antiquity to a timeless tropicalized Greece where "[a]dornan verdes palmas el blanco peristilo" (*PC* 526; "[t]here are green palms along the columned gallery"; Ibid). Relocated in a tropical temple, the correspondences between the cosmic and earthly world and the speaker's hunt unfold as follows,

> los astros me han predicho la visión de la Diosa;
> y en mi alma reposa la luz como reposa
> el ave de la luna sobre un lago tranquilo
> Y no hallo sino la palabra que huye,
> la iniciación melódica que de la flauta fluye
> y la barca del sueño que en el espacio boga. (Ibid)

> [the stars have shown me a vision of the goddess

> And in my soul, light extends itself in fullness
>
> like the moon's bird skimming the lake's tranquility.
>
> I can only find words that never seem to stay,
>
> pieces of a song from a flute, which slip away,
>
> the ship of those dreams, which drift aimlessly in space.] (Ibid)

Darío's merging of Parnassianism and Symbolism reveals a notion of poetry as a visionary potential that can be perceived through the senses and suggested, yet not fully seized by language, as we observe in "the vision" that becoming the poet's inner "light" results in elusive words, the musical streams of the orphic flute, and "la barca del sueño." While "the vision" or revelation faces the (im)possibility of language to capture it in its transmutations, "la iniciación melódica que de la flauta fluye" makes apparent two interrelated aesthetic and epistemological currents that coalesce in his poesis. The first one points to the idea of "el ritmo como fuente de la creación poética y como llave del universo," which, as Paz early claimed, ruled the work of romantics and symbolists and was rediscovered by the Spanish American modernist poets in the main and oldest Spanish poetic tradition (8; "rhythm as the source of poetic creation and as a key to the universe"). The second one symbolized in "la barca del sueño" conjoins this celestial and mysterious relation between music and poetry with a notion of poetry as "sueño y ensueño," or an idea of art "como creatividad visionaria," as Julio Ortega argues in his discussion of *Prosas profanas* (40; "sleep and dreaming"; "as visionary creativity").

Addressing Darío's poetry and articles about dreaming and its languages, which were posthumously collected in *El mundo de los sueños* (1922) [*The World of Dreams*], Ortega states that "[a]unque el sueño como fantaseo y la ensoñación como divagación no

están ausentes de la obra de Darío, incluso como un ligero juego sobre sus propios materiales, su planteamiento de la cuestión onírica se remonta al orfismo encantatorio, al culto de los lenguajes libres de la lógica de la producción y la reproducción" (65; "[t]hough sleep as fantasizing and dreaming as digression are not absent in Darío's *ouvre*, even as a subtle game on his own materials, his proposal on the oneiric question goes back to the incantatory Orphism, to the cult of the languages that are free from the logics of production and reproduction"). In spite of the fact that Ortega acknowledges the presence of sleep and dreaming in relation to fantasy in Darío, and highlights his interest in Orphism as source and driving force of his "poética del sueño," he relegates fantasy to the background (47; "poetics of sleep"). We think, as his use of the eighteenth-century tradition of "capricho" attests, that fantasy played a major role in his view of poetry as "sueño y el ensueño" since it fueled the imaginative process whereby the poet substantiated the nonexistent (47; "sleep and dreaming"). Whereas Martí in his notes about Goya extolled his "mágico efecto de luces," his outstanding genius and harsh social critique by claiming "[h]e ahí un gran filósofo, ese pintor, un gran vindicador, un gran demoledor de todo lo infame y lo terrible," Darío in his poem-portrait "A Goya" lauded the painter's bold and visionary genius and his use of fantasy, keenly encouraging poets to love his black and vermilions, his dark visions and "blancas irradiaciones, /…/ [p]orque entra en tu gran tesoro / el diestro que mata al toro, / la niña de rizos de oro" (1: 905, 908; "magical effect of lights"; "[t]here it is a great philosopher, this painter, a great vindicator, a great destructor of all that is vile and terrible"; *PC*, 569; "whitened

emanations, /…/ [b]ecause, within your plentiful / brush lie the killer of the bulls / and the girl with her golden curls"; Simon and White 23).[71]

Schulz claims that Goya's series evinces a tense dialectic between "observation and fantasy," which we observe is unsettled in Darío's modern(ist) "capricho," as the poet privileges fantasy over observation (11). Unlike Goya and Martí, who brought together imagination, fantasy, reason, and their immediate reality in their works, Darío dismissed the "light" of reason and reality per se, creating fantasy landscapes that conjure imagination, memory, sleep, dreaming, and Orphism. By discussing eighteenth-century ideas about sleep and its creative potential by the French Abbé Richard, the poet stressed the relationship between imagination and memory stating:

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[71] In plate 43, one of the most famous etchings of *Los Caprichos*, Francisco de Goya portrays a man that is seemingly sleeping over a desk with papers that suggests exhaustion from work. The sleeper however is surrounded by owls, bats, and other creatures that seem to disturb or threaten his sleep. In addition, Goya inscribed a caption in the sleeper's desk that reads "[e]l sueño de la razón produce monstruos" and included a prefatory note for this plate that states [l]a *imaginación* abandonada por la razón, produce monstruos imposibles; unida a ella está sin embargo la madre de las artes" ("the sleep of reason produces monsters"; "[*i*]*magination* abandoned by reason produces impossible monsters; united with her however is the mother of the arts"). Whereas the equivocality of the word "sueño" enables us to interpret "sleep" as the state of sleeping (and so as the absence of reason), as the oneiric state of dreaming, as the ideal or dream of reason or as an imaginative instance of reason, the prefatory inscription of this etching and the overt socio-political critique we note throughout his series indicate that the painter regarded that reason and imagination had to work in tandem, that they "united" engendered art. In this regard, Andrew Schulz argues that the reception and production of Goya's *Caprichos* "locate[s] the series in the interstices between Neoclassicism and Romanticism, reaffirming their crucial position in the history of European art" (12). It was from this liminal space that Goya confronted the monsters of Enlightenment rationalism, conflating reason, imagination, and fantasy in his visionary poetics. (In spring 2015, the Palmer Museum of Art of The Pennsylvania State University hosted the traveling exhibition of Francisco de Goya's series *Los Caprichos*, which I am grateful to have seen).

> [y]erra en considerar la memoria como facultad no concurrente, sin ver que la imaginación, sin la facultad mnemónica, no existe, pues no es posible imaginar nada sin estar en posesión de los elementos que aporta el recuerdo. Todo lo que imaginamos es con componentes que han pasado por nuestros sentidos, fuera de ciertas impresiones de los sueños que pertenecen al más allá, y aún estas surgen de los rincones de una desconocida pero sospechada prememoria (Darío qtd. in Ortega 114).
>
> [h]e errs in considering memory as a non-concurrent faculty and not seeing that imagination without the mnemonic faculty does not exist, since it is not possible to imagine anything without being in possession of the elements provided by the memory. Everything we imagine has components that have passed through our senses, with the exception of some impressions of the dreams that belong to beyond, and even they emerge from the corners of an unknown yet suspected prememory.]

In this way, Darío acknowledged that, even if he wanted to delink from his time and reality, there was no way to produce either the unreal or a poetic reality that is completely detached from reality since imagination is affected by memory and "pre-memory" and so it unavoidably draws from what our senses have experienced and recorded. In the intertwining of imagination, reality, memory, the world of dreams and "pre-memory," he not only explored the "celestial unity" that makes burgeon "mundos diversos" in the poet, or the unity between the mind and the cosmos, as he stated in his poem "Ama tu ritmo" ["Love your rhythm"], but also created poetic realities that by indirectly drawing from reality and capriciously transforming it gave gravity to a different mode of the mimetic[72]

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[72] Aristotle's resignification of Plato's notion of mimesis in his *Poetics* not only distinguished poetry from factual discourse such as that of science, history, or philosophy, but also identified three different modes of poetic representation, that is, the poet, like the painter or other image-maker, can represent "(a) things as they were or are, or (b) things as people say and think [they were or are], or (c) things as they should be" ([25], 113). While his notion of mimesis allowed for idealism by accepting the operations of imagination, he nonetheless rejected fantasy since the poets' representation of experience should adhere to universal standards of human understanding, which in turn are related not to things "that have happened, but [to] things that may happen, i.e. that are possible in accordance with probability or necessity" (Aristotle [9], 97). Equally relevant

(*PC* 522; "universe of universes"; "[t]he celestial unity which you work out"; Acereda and Derusha 153).

As Darío stated in his "Palabras liminares," "mas he aquí que veréis en mis versos princesas, reyes, cosas imperiales, visiones de países lejanos o imposibles; ¡qué queréis!, yo detesto la vida y el tiempo en que me tocó nacer," he abhorred his immediate reality and sought to deflect from it through imagination, fantasy, the past, and cosmopolitanism (*PC* 472; "yet note here that you will see in my verses princesses, kings, imperial matters, visions of lands remote or impossible: what do you expect? I detest the life and times into which I had to be born"; 113). His significant yet not total departure from actuality and the local in his blue verse and profane prose was grounded not only on his anti-positivist, decadent, aestheticist, and cosmopolitan and transnational perspectives, but also upon his contention with nationalist, and neoclassic and romantic notions of poesis and the poet. Despite his active involvement in hemispheric politics in prose during this time, in poetry he chose to embark on "la barca del sueño" toward his "reino interior" (*PC* 511; "interior kingdom"). A space whence he returned with his *Songs of Life and Hope* (1905) not only to reassert his respect "por la nobleza del arte" and his "intenso amor a lo absoluto de la belleza," but also to join the continental protest against U.S. imperialism (*PC* 529; "for

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is the aporia lying at the heart of his notion of mimesis, since if the latter as showing or acting up differs from diegesis as telling or narrative description, and so tragedy "is a representation not of human beings but of action and life," he also emphasized that the unity of tragic or epic plot relies on narrative conditions ([6], 95). In this way, mimesis became a complex and crucial set of ideas in poetic theory that entails numerous variations and interpretations that have been produced from antiquity to the twentieth century. As for the nineteenth-century debate between naturalism and romanticism about mimesis, it is important to stress that though romantic artists spurned mimesis, they did not discard all mimetic arguments.

the nobility of Art"; "intense love for the absolute nature of beauty"; Acereda and Derusha 159). In *Prosas profanas*, however, Darío privileged fantasy over realism, suggestion over description, the past over the present, the cosmopolis over the local, and beauty over ethics in an aestheticist quest where beauty as the goal of art and life became the only restraint of freedom. As Julio Ramos argues, in Darío's late nineteenth-century poetic works we find how freedom in poesis or "la autonomía, en su forma más radical, se separaba de lo "humano", como anotaba T.W. Adorno, haciendo del arte un objeto éticamente vacío" (Ramos 96; "[a]s Theodor Adorno notes, this kind of autonomy – autonomy in its most radical form – is separated from the "human," since it tends to make of art an ethically empty object"; John D. Blanco 58).

Like Darío, Dickinson, Martí, and Whitman neither renounced imagination nor submitted to reality's and realism's constraints. However, they engaged with them in ways that, despite their imaginative flights through symbolism, reasserted the link between poetry and reality. Their depictions of the quotidian or of everyday life show that they also explored forms to divert from mimetic representations of reality, but they did it without detaching from their immediate reality. Despite this difference, in his retreat to "cosas imperiales, países lejanos o imposibles" Darío produced an aesthetic and epistemological "directional causality" that reoriented poetic creation from neoclassic and romantic imitations of reality. By indirectly channeling from reality through imagination, memory, sleep and dreaming as his "capricho" illustrates, he created a poetic reality that though it is recognizable, it does not exist nor entirely conforms to reality, thus, creating a different mode of the mimetic. His "barca del sueño" then resumes its journey in "Yo persigo una forma" to wind up at the Sleeping Beauty's

dream, where we are left with "el sollozo continuo del chorro de la fuente / y el cuello del gran cisne blanco que me interroga" (*PC* 526; "the soft and steady crying of the fountain's flow, / and the swan's great white neck, with its questions, its grace"; 141). Whether we interpret the last line of the poem as the poet seeing the world "como una inmensa pregunta: no es el hombre el que interroga al ser, sino éste al hombre" as Paz did, or as a moment when the I of the poet unfolds to include "el tú del lector: aquel Yo inicial adelantaba las preguntas del lector, que acompaña al peregrino de la belleza hecha verdad mutua" as Ortega claims, the last tercet underscores Darío's poesis as one that conjures poetics of fantasy, metamorphosis, and the world of dreams in a poetic expression that, as evinced throughout his poetry, was in constant experimentation and transformation (Paz 10; Ortega 49; "like a huge question: it is not man who interrogates being, but rather being is that which questions man"; "the you of the reader: that initial I anticipated the questions of the reader, that joins the pilgrim of beauty made a shared truth"). His "capricho" substantiates his efforts to reorient poetry from mimetic logics of production through the movement of analogy, the inclusion of visions, and the creation of fantasy landscapes, which working in tandem manifest a continuous rather than lineal approach to poesis that privileges fantasy and irrationality, via symbolism and the world of dreams, while delinking from actuality and ethics. However, as the symbol turns into a sign in the swan to highlight, his quest for a form for his libertarian style remains unsolved.

Re-imagining the Quotidian in Whitman's, Dickinson's, and Martí's Distinctive Realisms

Ángel Rama, in his 1983 essay previously mentioned, noted that Martí and Dickinson have "comunes devociones emersonianas, comunes impregnaciones de religiosidad natural, comunes atenciones a la vida cotidiana y, desde las *Flores del destierro*, comunes tendencias de precisión enunciativa y a la elipsis para dibujar velozmente sus visiones" (125; "common Emersonian devotions, common impregnations of natural religiosity, common interest in daily life and, since *Flowers of Exile*, common inclinations to an enunciative precision and the use of the ellipsis to quickly draw their visions"). While many of these features have been observed by critics of Martí and Dickinson, and can also be found in Whitman, Rama highlighted crucial commonalities between them. Martí, Dickinson, and Whitman manifested a keen interest in representing the quotidian or manifold aspects of everyday life using a more colloquial language. Our poets experienced the birth of an era whose novelty and hectic unfolding demanded to express not "the satin and patchouli of to-day, not the glorification of the butcheries and wars of the past, nor any fight between Deity on one side and somebody else on the other," but rather "the essence and integral facts, real and spiritual, of the whole land, the whole body," as Whitman argued in "Poetry To-day in America – Shakespeare – The Future" (1023, 1015). Yet, to sing the whirls and growth of his time and the genius of his country, which for Whitman was "always most in the common people," in their uncelebrated "manners speech dress friendship – the freshness and candor of their physiognomy – the picturesque looseness of their carriage…," a different way of seeing and grasping reality, and a renovated poetic language to represent it was needed (6).

By imagining ways to do so, Whitman produced a Lezamian image that renders visible and crystallizes a notion of modern poetry as one “to be indirect and not direct or descriptive or epic” (8). His poetic image thus opened a parenthesis in discourse and cultural memory to introject an aesthetic and epistemological “directional causality” that in advancing a suggestive and non-descriptive poetic expression stretched prevailing notions of the mimetic, the lyric, and poetic language. Whitman aimed to materialize his poetic precept in *Leaves of Grass* by using several formal and literary techniques and including actuality as expressed in everyday life and factual information. His experimentations with poetic language can be seen, on the one hand, in his rejection of meter, rhyme, and traditional poetic diction, as well as in his call for a plain style, which, as Patrick Redding points out, are often considered as the founding principles of his “poetic theory” (671). And, on the other hand, through his use of free verse, phrasing, catalogs, among other devices that resulted in an impressionistic and expansive poetic expression that, as Martí argued in his essay “El poeta Walt Whitman” (1887), correlated with an era of renovation and emancipation that “liras ni serventesios remilgados” could contain (Martí 1: 1142; “neither lyres nor dainty quatrains”; Allen 192). Whitman considered that “[t]he art of art, the glory of expression and the sunshine of the light of letters is simplicity” and so, he strove to avoid excess and abstraction in poetic diction by attempting to emulate the vernacular (13). In so doing, he produced a totalizing image of the United States that aspired to consolidate the multiple into “the Union.” As he stated, “I will not make poems with reference to parts, / But I will make poems, songs, thoughts, with reference to ensemble,” thus, creating “omnivorous lines” that formed an organic

poetic reality in which everything seems to appear in the matter of representation, especially what had not been represented in poetry before (183, 236).

Whitman's expansive poetic look, with its consequent reenactment of the Virgilian maxim *e pluribus unum* (Out of Many, One), amounted to the merging of difference into sameness in his poetry and prose. In his efforts to achieve a dialectical synthesis, he not only eclipsed racial, ethnic, gender and class conflicts intra-nationally, but also jeopardized the right to freedom and self-determination of other American independent nations. Despite the evidence, critics have often related his poetry with a "democratic poetics" that, according to Betsy Erkkila, is seen in "his attempt to create a democratic language, form, content, and myth commensurate with the experimental politics of America" (69). *Leaves of Grass* certainly symptomatizes the poet's ideal of democracy by producing a composite and all-encompassing representation of the United States as an undivided and inclusive society. However, his incorporation of what by the time was considered as non-poetic or as anti-poetic matter, in conjunction with his attempts to reproduce the immediacy of colloquial speech and modern life constitute transgressive features of his poetry that indisputably contributed to unhinge the doors of "el mundo de la *poesis*" in the Americas ("the world of *poesis*"). The transformations Whitman introduced in poetic discourse manifest aesthetic, epistemological, and ethical directional causalities that are integrated in a "poetic speech that employed a low register of diction, and a syntax that avoided hierarchical constructions like subordinate clauses" (Redding 673). His use of free verse, parataxis, non-normative punctuation, phrasing, and colloquialisms proves to be crucial in this achievement; however, his phrasal method

stands out as a structural aspect of his unruly poetic language that enables us to examine ways in which he sparked a different mode of the mimetic.

Martí early noted how the phrase in Whitman's poetry worked as a master category that allowed him to organize, accumulate, expand, and mobilize his impressions, visions, vistas, and thoughts like the waves in the sea. As he stated, "[e]n ocasiones parece el lenguaje de Whitman el frente colgado de reses de una carnicería … suena otras veces como un beso brusco … pero jamás pierde la frase su movimiento rítmico de ola…sus frases desligadas, flagelantes, incompletas, sueltas, más que expresan, emiten" (1:1143; "[a]t times Whitman's language is like the entrance to a butcher's shop … then again it sounds like a rough kiss … [b]ut his lines never lose the rhythmic motion of the waves … [h]is disjointed, lacerating, fragmented, drifting words do not express but emanate"; 193). Like Martí, Angus Fletcher, drawing from Leo Spitzer, notes the importance of the phrase in Whitman's poetry and identifies it "as the minimal life-unit of coherent expression" that "is itself modeled on the virtually infinite translation of the wave – in nature, art, thought, and human experience" (105, 104). As he explains, the word 'phrase' comes from the Greek *phrasis* and *phrazein* which means "to tell." Whereas in Western music the phrase refers to a "cadenced thought, coming through inflected cadenced melody," and in dance to a "series of movements comprising a pattern," in grammar it represents the shortest expression to tell, which is characterized as a group of words "that form a sense-unit" that does not contain predication[73] (Fletcher

[73] In this regard, the Argentine poet Diana Bellessi (1946-) discusses meanings of the 'phrase,' adding that the phrase might also involve a "*sentido figurado* con forma inalterable, de uso vulgar y que no incluye sentencia alguna; o [que] es de uso común y sí expresa una sentencia pero a modo de proverbio, de *sentido antiguo* y difuso" (Bellessi

105). In effect, the phrase is a fragmentary or brief sense-unit that suffices to make sense and that "expresses a thought, with the *effect* of the thought always being a fragment or part of a larger union" (105).

As a particle with its own life, sense, rhythm, color, and intention that composes and is in dialogue with the "ensemble," the phrase not only disrupts the hierarchical relation of predication that exists in clausal forms, frustrating the possibility of subordination as Redding, Fletcher, Spitzer, among other critics, have noted, but also becomes the means whereby the poet brings about a distinct mode of the mimetic that tells the immediate reality in a non-descriptive way. This telling is neither narrative nor lineal, but rather telegraphic and contrapuntal, which in turns demands the reader's participation to grasp and link its fragments to the other parts of the ensemble. As the poet commanded, "[y]ou shall not look through my eyes either, not take things from me, / You shall listen to all sides and filter them from your self" (190). Whitman's impressionistic and contrapuntal mode can be seen throughout his *Leaves of Grass*, yet section 26 of "Song of Myself" fixates a "visión histórica" that "participando en la historia" introduces an aesthetic, epistemological, and ethical "causalidad de sentido" that re-presents the quotidian otherwise (Lezama Lima 49; "historic vision"; "participating in history"; "directional causality"). As the song of his self and his numerous references to music, singing, voice, and musical instruments indicate, music in general and the Italian opera in particular, as Vera Brodsky Lawrence, Robert Faner, Alice Cooke, and Louise Pound have argued, played a significant role in Whitman's poetry. Not only did he

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81; "*a figurative sense* with an unalterable form of common use that does not imply a sentence; or [that] it is of common use and it expresses a sentence as a proverb with an *old* and diffuse *sense*").

frequently attend opera houses in New York, but he also explicitly manifested his fascination with opera in poems such as “That Music Always Round Me” (1867), “Proud Music of the Storm” (1869), “Italian Music in Dakota” (1881), and “Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking” (1881), to name a few.

Leo Spitzer, in his discussion of “Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking,” pointed out that Whitman offers an operatic poem in which he notes “a straightforward narrative interrupted by the lyrical songs or ‘arias’ of the birds” (239). Though in this poem the analogy with operatic singing is explicit (and which overall comprises the recitative and aria style, or a narrative, speech-inflected, and a melodic or lyrical singing), section 26 brings forth a compressed and unconventional operatic act divided in two parts. Whereas the first one corresponds to a recitative that is sung by voices or sounds that crowd the city, the second part rehearses an aria of a “grand opera” whose orchestra, as the speaker states, “wrenches such ardors from me I did not know I possess’d them” (214). Therefore, by doing “nothing but listen” to the sounds that are to enlarge his song, Whitman’s piece begins thus:

> I hear bravuras of birds, bustle of growing wheat, gossip of
>
> flames, clacks of sticks cooking my meals,
>
> I hear the sound I love, the sound of the human voice,
>
> I hear all sounds running together, combined, fused or following,
>
> Sounds of the city and sounds out the city, sounds of the
>
> day and night […] (214)

Opening with the “bravuras” of birds or with the music of the most skillful singers, as the “bravura” in opera stresses the performers’ virtuosity, the music continues through a

succession of phrases that transforms the sounds or voices that populate and coexist in the city into instruments or characters that tell their story by performing it as sound. In contrast to “Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking,” which comes from the speaker’s memory and portrays the speaker and the birds as the main singers, in section 26 the speaker’s voice appears as one out of many voices or sounds that constitute the ensemble. As if the speaker were walking around the city and simultaneously translating the sounds he hears, his phrases emerge as non-narrative and juxtaposed aural and visual concurrent images that transmit the music that different voices or instruments make in the urban quotidian. Through the synesthetic conflation of sound, color, and motion, as seen in the “gossip of flames,” the “clack of sticks cooking my meals” and “the faint tones of the sick,” Whitman elaborates cinematic images that, alluring to our eyes and ears, reach our imagination to show us reality anew (214).

Like “the sound of the human voice,” be it in conversations or in “the loud laugh of work-people at their meals,” every phrase plays its part in the ensemble “combined, fused” and always in motion, producing a song of everyday life that makes visible and hearable not only the “[t]he heave’e’yo of stevedores unlading ships by the wharves, the refrain of the anchor-lifters,” but also “[t]he steam-whistle, the solid roll of the train of approaching cars” (214). The insertion of workers and the emulation of their ordinary speech, as we hear in the “heave’e’yo of stevedores” and the “refrain” of anchor pullers, which evokes the twittering of birds as well as the musical and the verbal refrain, crack poetic discourse and cultural memory to re-cognize them as equally composing the reality of modern life by syntactically placing them in parallel to the outcomes of technological advances, on the one hand. And, on the other hand, to symbolically inscribe the countless

anonymous and unheard voices that resonate in the workers' voices as voices that too weave and form the language we inhabit as human beings. As Bellessi observes, though the phrase is less influenced by the verb or by time, while often attached to the present, as is also seen in Whitman's abundant participial phrases, it disengages neither with the past nor with the future (81). Rather, whether it comes from the language formed "out of the work, needs, ties, joys, affections, tastes, of long generations of humanity," as Whitman stated in "Slang in America" (1885), or from the sensory experience of reality, the phrase, as Bellessi argues, drawing from Giorgio Agamben's idea of the *Kairos*, in *Infancy and History: The Destruction of Experience* (1993), becomes "el *kairós* del lenguaje, el momento justo, una oportunidad para tomar lo dado como real y transformarlo" (1166; Bellessi 86; "the *kairos* of language, the right moment, an opportunity to take what is given as real and transform it").

Along this line, in "El carácter de la "Revista Venezolana" (1881) ["The Nature of the 'Venezuelan Magazine'"], Martí noted that every topic or situation demands its own writing style and pointed to the phrase as facilitating or enabling the production of different styles. As he observed in the phrases of authors that delighted themselves either in the contemplation of the twilight of the past or in the dawn "que origina el penetrar anhelante y trémulo en lo porvenir" (2: 431; "that arises from the yearning and tremulous penetration into the future"). In both cases, however, the phrase appears as a means for the poet to intervene in reality in the present, be it by re-cognizing the past "a regocijos de frase, donaire y discreteo," or by seeping into the future "a carrera fulgorosa y vívida, donde la frase suene como escudo, taje como espada y arremeta como lanza" (Ibid; "by rejoicing in the phrase, with discretion and grace"; "in a shining and intense race whereby

the phrase sounds like a shield, slices like a sword, and attacks like a spear"). Seized and captivated by the endless, fleeting, and concurrent "sounds of the day and night" that nature and modern life yield in the city, Whitman attempted to outline, fixate, and accumulate them in his voracious phrases, which in turn, by unsettling grammatical subordination, linear thinking, and narrative description created a poetic reality that shows us "that we call Being" otherwise (214).

Like Whitman, Martí not only considered that "[n]i líricos ni épicos pueden ser hoy con naturalidad y sosiego los poetas," but also asked for simplicity in poetic diction by opposing "[el] verso natural" to "el verso retórico y ornado" (2: 404; "[t]o the poets of today neither the lyric nor the epic mode comes naturally and calmly"; Allen 44; 2: 1412; "the natural verse"; "the rhetorical and florid verse"). Similarly, as his parable-like poem "Cuentan que antaño…" ["They say that in the past…"] teaches "¡[a]sí, quien caza por la rima, aprende / Que en sus garras se escapa la poesía!," Martí argued that the rhyme was a hindrance to capture the fleeting and winged visions and thoughts that appeared to the poet (2: 1404; "[i]n this way, that who hunts for the rhyme learns / how poetry escapes from his clutches"). Martí also joined Whitman in using free verse, yet he did not spurn meter and rather called for "un metro nuevo" for every state of the soul (2: 1412; "a new meter"). Carlos Javier Morales in *La poética de José Martí y su contexto* (1994) states that Martí ascribes to "la ruptura romántica de la mímesis férreamente realista, pero no elude el arraigo que la realidad poética ha de mantener en la realidad externa visible" (121; "the romantic rupture of the rigid realist mimesis, but he does not elude the rootedness that the poetic reality is to keep with the external, visible reality"). Indeed, all our poets experimented with language and realism in ways that reoriented poetic

discourse from the mimesis of reality. Yet, while Darío in *Azul* and *Prosas profanas* partially diverted from his immediate reality and adopted a radical autonomist stance that appears to disregard ethical values as ulterior values of art, Whitman, Martí, and Dickinson remained rooted in their actualities and conveyed ethical directional causalities.

Whitman's realism bears an ethical "directional causality" that renders visible segments of U.S. society that had not been poeticized before, representing them as integrating and equally contributing to the making of modern reality. However, the poetic reality he created also evinces his silence on interracial conflicts, intra-national expansionist policies, and "the tensions within white society that resulted from capitalization, industrialization, and the division of labour" (David Simpson 187). Whether we consider his realism as a prognosis of what he envisioned as a reality to-come, the result of optimism, naivety, and myopia, or all of these together, his factual deviation signals a difference with regard to the sense of truthfulness that Martí and Dickinson attributed to their realisms. In Martí's view, poetry not only "ha de tener la raíz en la tierra, y base de hecho real," but also has to be sincere since "[m]ás vale estar en ocio que emplearse en lo mezquino. Y callar, que no hablar la verdad" (1: 802; "has to be rooted in the land and based on reality"; 2: 431; "it is better to be idle than to involve oneself in selfishness. And, it is better to say nothing than not saying the truth"). His works, as Morales also notes, manifest a "realismo de intención solidaria" or a commitment with justice and reality that conjoins ethics and aesthetics (226; "realism of solidary intention"). As we discussed in the previous chapter, Martí aimed to deflect the hegemonic individualist ethos by redirecting it toward a solidary ethos that signifies an

understanding of moral perfection that is inextricably linked to an idea of good that results from the engagement and commitment with the collective or with the happiness and well-being of others.

This ethical and epistemological reorientation permeates Martí's writings. However, in "Joaquín Tejada, El pintor cubano y su cuadro 'La lista de lotería'" (1894), he creates a Lezamian image that captures an ethical and aesthetic directional causality that bridges art and ethics in the following terms,

> [e]l mundo es patético, y el artista mejor no es quien lo cuelga y recama, de modo que sólo se le vea el raso y el oro, y pinta amable el pecado oneroso, y mueve a fe inmoral en el lujo y en la dicha, sino quien usa el don de componer con la palabra, o los colores, de modo que se vea la pena del mundo, y quede el hombre movido a su remedio. Mientras haya un antro, no hay derecho al sol. (1: 840)
>
> [t]he world is pathetic, and the best artist is not that who hangs it and embellishes it, in a way that only the gold and satin are seen, and kindly paints the burdensome sin, and draws into an immoral faith in luxury and happiness, but that who uses the talent to compose with the word, or the colors, in a way that the sorrow of the world is seen, and men felt drawn toward its relief. As long as there exists a den, there is no right to the sun.]

Unlike Darío, who loathed the times in which he lived and was lured by the aestheticist maxim "art for art's sake," manifesting a formalist stance (understood as an autonomist and aestheticist perspective[74]) toward poesis and poetry, Martí considered that beauty and the spiritual well-being was neither in the worship of the past and the retreat from actuality, nor in the excessive love for material comfort, but rather in honestly and imaginatively poeticizing the intertwining between the individual and collective experience of life and reality. In contrast to the fusion between art and life proposed by aestheticism, Martí fused life and poetry, not only transforming writing as a vital aspect

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[74] For a discussion of different ideas embedded in the concept of formalism, see Daniel Jacobson's "In Praise of Immoral Art" (1997).

of his existence that communicates the experience of life, but also endowing it with an "existential dimension" that differs from the abstraction and confessionalism expressed by the romantics, and that connects him with contemporary existentialism, as Morales notes (186, 188). Martí's writings expose his meditations about the human condition and a realism that strove to convey the beauty and pathos of life, or the joy, suffering, and "horror," as he several times called it, of being alive. His poetic image introduces a notion of art that transmits an ethical, epistemological, and aesthetic "directional causality" that diverts from aestheticist and romantic premises about art by contending that art should express the beauty, virtues, pathos, and contradictions of life, as well as humanitarian purposes in ways that propel action or that motivate humanity to relieve "la pena del mundo" (1: 840; "the sorrow of the world").

Like Whitman and Martí, Dickinson passed on a sense of truthfulness in poetry that correlated with her way of seeing the world and the oblique mode she developed to express it. In her famous poem "Tell all the truth but tell it slant," the poet crystallizes her position about the relation between ethics and aesthetics by creating the following Lezamian image:

> [t]ell all the truth but tell it slant –
>
> Success in Circuit lies
>
> Too bright for our infirm Delight
>
> The Truth's superb surprise
>
> As Lightning to the Children eased
>
> With explanation kind
>
> The Truth must dazzle gradually

Or every man be blind – (Fr1263)

Critics have often noted that ballads and hymns constitute the most significant formal influences in Dickinson's poetry. As Cristanne Miller points out, the poet not only wrote several poems in the "common meter and short meter" employed in hymn forms following 8686 and 6686 iambics, which is also noticeable in the iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter of this poem, but also experimented "with stanza structure, meter, beat-based rhythms, and rhyme schemes" in ways that "closely resemble those of her predecessors in the 1840s and 1850s" (122, 125). The regularity of the 4343 beat structure, the perfect end rhyme in 'lies'/ 'surprise' and 'kind'/'blind,' the slant rhyme in 'slant'/'delight' and 'eased'/'gradually,' and the commanding and deceiving tones expressed in the 't' and 's' alliteration compose a memorable soundscape that dramatizes the interpretive choices the poem offers.

Whether we consider that Dickinson's poem indicates that "if the truth is, like the sun, too bright to be viewed head on, then to advocate always telling it straight is to say we would be better off blind," as Daniel Jacobson argues, or that it recommends "not to hide it [the truth] from those preferring untruth, but rather to mediate it, out of kindness, to those as yet too weak to bear its glare," as Helen Vendler claims, her poem represents a statement of veracity in art that calls for telling "all the truth" (Jacobson 183; Vendler 431). As Jacobson notes, the poem could be assailed on moral grounds since "some readers… will likely see the poem as an apologia for deception, all the more dangerous for its seductive eloquence" (183). However, as the adjective "all" stresses, the poem advocates neither for a partial disclosure nor for a distortion of "the truth." Unlike Martí, who often claimed to depict only what his eyes saw, ascribing a sense of directness and

immediacy to the glimpses of reality he captured in his poems, Dickinson proposes a slant, kind, and gradual approach as a more effective way to succeed in disclosing "[t]he Truth's superb surprise." While we might or might not agree with the poet that the direct telling of "the truth" can paradoxically sabotage its enlightening purpose by overpowering us to the extent of blinding us, Dickinson and Martí coincide in endorsing the telling of "the truth," or in interrelating ethics and aesthetics. Marrying form and content, as seen in the correlation between the aural and visualscape Dickinson creates, her poetic image produces an ethical, aesthetic, and epistemological "directional causality" that asserts truthfulness in art and endows it with an ethical and aesthetic value that decidedly deflects poesis from formalist tenets.

Miller argues that, despite the commonalities between Dickinson's poetry and that of her predecessors and contemporaries, her poetry radically differs "in its extreme compression… in the density and intensity of her metaphors and the extent of the disjunction caused by its compressed syntax, punctuation, and juxtapositions," as well as in "avoiding detailed description and narrative shading… omitting parts of a sentence's grammar" and eschewing poeticisms, "making her language colloquial" (126, 127). As we have discussed, some of these characteristics are also noticeable in the poetry of our poets. Yet, although Dickinson and Martí had a radical interest in language and so were concerned with the etymology of words, used archaisms and neologisms, and aimed to achieve intensity, precision, economy of words, and eloquence in their poems, Dickinson produced a poetic realism that distinguishes hers from Martí's and Whitman's realism. Since "[u]nto the Legislature" her country bade her go, Dickinson, unlike our male poets who actively participated in public life, progressively withdrew from it to the extent of

barely leaving her family house (Fr2). In consequence, her "home" came to signify both rootedness and exile, or an interstitial space whence she attempted "to radically restructure the typical relations between time and space, inside and outside, public and private space, within modern industrial societies," while reimagining the quotidian and producing a different mode of the mimetic in the process (Thomas Foster 33).

As her poetry attests, Dickinson dwelled "in Possibility – / A fairer House than Prose," exploring the "Windows," "Doors," "Chambers," and rooms of poetry's "House," and assigning a central place to the domestic space that often portrays a speaker doing different activities indoors (Fr466). Drawing from Diana Fuss's focus on the trope of doors in Dickinson's poems, Magdalena Zapedowska argues that while doors and windows "make possible withdrawal from and contact with the outside world," the window "because of its transparence… forms a special kind of barrier which allows seeing without being seen or compromising the safety of separation" (80). Indeed, the windows in her poems appear not only as thresholds whereby the self and the world connect without amalgamating or "compromising" their individualities, but also as planes that frame her poetic look. As we observe in the poem "By my Window have I for Scenery," the speaker offers us a "Scenery" as "[j]ust a Sea – with a Stem – / If the Bird and the Farmer – deem it a "Pine" – / The opinion will do – for them –" (Fr849). By connecting the inner and the outer through her "Window" and yet keeping them apart, as the speaker underlines that her view differs from what nature and culture as symbolized by "the Bird and the Farmer" regard as "a 'Pine,'" she refashions reality, creating a perpendicular image that turns the sky and a tree into "[j]ust a Sea – with a Stem –" with "no Port, nor a "Line" – but the Jays –" (Fr849).

While it seems unlikely that "[w]e shall find the Cube of the Rainbow," we can continue to observe her distinctive realism in the poem "There's been a death in the opposite house" (Fr1517, 547). There, the "numb look" of the neighboring houses discloses a viewer that seemingly peering through the window shows us how

> The Neighbors rustle in and out –
> The Doctor – drives away –
> A Window opens like a pod –
> – Abrupt – mechanically –
>
> Somebody flings a Mattrass out –
> The Children hurry by –
> They wonder if it died – on that –
> I used to – when a Boy – (Fr547)

As if every juxtaposing line were a different angle interlocked by the dashes, Dickinson assembles an image in which several members of the community or perspectives concur in expressing the experience of "Death" "in just a Country Town" (Ibid). Through her poetic look "[a] Window opens like a pod –" to re-present in a succession of planes the transformation and transit from life to "Death," as the "Window," the "Mattrass" and "the House" whose measure is to be taken by "the Man / Of the Appalling Trade" illustrate (Ibid). Her poems crystallize her efforts to deflect from mimetic representations of reality through the articulation of a geometrical and compressed aesthetic perspective that either

from the inside out or from the outside in defamiliarizes and transforms the quotidian without eliminating the frame that separates the self and the world.

In contrast to Dickinson, whose poetry reimagined the reality she experienced at "home" or "in just a Country Town," Whitman and Martí portrayed their experience in the city. In the face of the convulsed and distressing times he lived and witnessed during his stay in New York (1880-1895), Martí regarded injustice as a test "y el silencio culpa," which translated into a strong ethical perspective committed to documenting and denouncing injustice (2:431; "and silence as guilt"). As seen in his chronicles about the United States, Martí not only registered the black people's struggle for their civil rights and the annexation of Indigenous peoples' territories, but also the workers' unionization, their fights for the "derecho humano al trabajo y a la vida" and rebellions "contra los que les pagan salarios que no bastan para mantenerlos en pie" across the country, to name some of the issues he addressed (1: 1545; "human right to work and live"; "against those who pay them wages that do not suffice to keep them up"). Along this line, *Versos libres*, which was posthumously published in 1913, is often considered as bridging modern and contemporary poetry and inaugurating the poetry about the city in Spanish America.[75] There, Martí proclaimed freedom in poesis and endeavored to renovate the poetic form, evincing his originality, the visionary, simultaneous, and sincere character of his poetry, as well as a different mode of the mimetic that results from the intertwining of his subjectivity and his experience of reality. As he stated in his prologue titled "Mis Versos"

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[75] While we do not know the reasons Martí had for not publishing his poems, a note in the manuscripts of his poems dated in 1893 and the dates found in some poems enabled critics to establish that *Versos libres* were produced between 1878 and 1882, that is to say, before and during the time he wrote and published *Ismaelillo* (1882), his first book of poetry.

(1882) ["My Verses"], "[t]ajos son éstos de mis propias entrañas –mis guerreros–… No zurcí de éste y aquél, sino sajé en mí mismo. Van escritos, no en tinta de academia, sino en mi propia sangre. Lo que aquí doy a ver lo he visto antes (yo lo he visto, yo), y he visto mucho más, que huyó sin darme tiempo a que copiara sus rasgos" (2: 1364; "[t]hese –my warriors– are gashes in my own entrails… I did not stitch together bits of this and that, but cut deep into myself. These poems emerged written not in academic ink but in my own blood. Whatever I place on view here I once have seen (I have seen it: me), and I have seen much more, which fled before I could copy its features"; Allen 57)

Versos libres dramatizes the tension between neoclassicism and romanticism in the poet's quest for a poetic expression that correlates with a time of "vallas rotas" and "reenquiciamiento y remolde," yet also with the "¡[r]uines tiempos, en que no priva mas que el arte que el de llenar bien los graneros de la casa, y sentarse en silla de oro, y vivir todo dorado" (2: 444, 445, 443; "broken fences"; "realignment and restructuring"; "[c]ontemptible times, these: when the only art that prevails is that of piling one's own granaries high, sitting on a seat of gold and living all in gold"; Allen 44, 45, 43). In so aiming, Martí created a distinguishing realism[76] that without restricting "la expansión de la fantasía ni la significación irracional del símbolo" depicts the city, often implicitly, as a

[76] As Rama argued, Martí rejected realism as a literary style and considered "que el naturalismo no era más que una denominación pomposa para un defecto, 'la carencia de imaginación,'" which translated into a servile copy of details that did not contribute anything original (82; "that naturalism was no more than an ostentatious denomination for a shortcoming, 'the lack of imagination'"). Yet, as Rama also noted, [l]a parte de escritor realista que hay en Martí es en verdad central e indispensable para comprender su arte," since he took from realism the "exactitud," "precision," and "observación directa" to generate a poetry that without renouncing to fantasy and imagination is rooted in reality (84; "what there in Martí of realist writer is in truth central and necessary to grasp his art"; "exactitude"; "direct observation").

space of fragmentation, exile, violence, and suffering. (Morales 226; "the expansion of fantasy nor the irrational signification of the symbol"). As he stated in "Amor de ciudad grande" ["Big City's Love"], ¡[l]a edad es ésta de los labios secos! / ¡De las noches sin sueño! ¡De la vida / Estrujada en agraz! /…/ ¡Me espanta la ciudad!" (2: 1383; "this is the age of the dry lips! / Of the sleepless nights! Of the life / prematurely squeezed! /…/ The city terrifies me!"). While his view of the city reminds us of Andrés Bello's antinomy between the city and the countryside in his "Agricultura de la zona tórrida" ["Ode to Tropical Agriculture"], and as Roberto González Echevarría notes, he uses pastoral imagery in this poem, the city does not oppose to the countryside and rather appears as a "soto selvoso" (Ibid; "jungle-like thicket"). As Echevarría argues, Martí's poem exposes not only how "el mundo edénico anterior a la caída, y el mundo urbano postedénico" get confused, but also that a new poetic language is not in choosing between one world or the other, but rather it is "entre ese lenguaje babélico que los confunde, y otro que está más allá de ambos" (170; "the Edenic world before the fall, and the post-Edenic urban world"; "but between that Babelian language that confuses them, and another that is beyond both").

Unlike Bello, Martí did not propose a return to the Arcadia; instead his *Versos libres* discloses, on the one hand, "la insuficiencia del lenguaje y de la poesía cuando éstos permanecen en un plano ideal y abstracto" and, on the other hand, the quest for a language that anchored in its historical time aims to transform it through action (Echevarría 170; "the insufficiency of language and poetry when they remain in an ideal and abstract sphere"). Although Martí did not disengage from the romantic aspiration of achieving universal harmony through poetry, he gave it, as Echeverría claims, "una nueva

dimensión al integrar su poesía a un programa político coherente – la libertad anunciada y deseada en *Versos libres* sólo tendrá sentido cuando poesía y acción política sean unas –" (170; "a new dimension by integrating his poetry to a coherent political program –the freedom announced and desired in *Free Verses* will only have sense when poetry and political action are one"). In this regard, his programmatic poem "Estrofa nueva" ["New Stanza"] constitutes a Lezamian image that captures not only this correlation between life and poetry, or the interrelation between politics, ethics, and aesthetics that is embedded in his poetics, but also a different mode of the mimetic. His "New Stanza" opens with an apostrophic address to "Poesía" that re-cognizes it as a vital source of relief and energy that enables the poet to see that "[ancha es y hermosa y fúlgida la vida / Que éste o aquél o yo vivamos tristes, / Culpa de éste o aquél será, o mi culpa!" (2: 1385; "Poetry"; "wide and beautiful and brilliant is life / That this one and that one or myself live sad / it is their fault, or mine!").

This positive affirmation of life and will-power to build and change our existence is expanded with a declaration of poetry's freedom that is juxtaposed with the man's freedom, thus, "[s]in más brida que el viento el corcel nace / Espoleador y flameador; al hombre / La vida echa sus riendas en la cuna" (Ibid; "with no more bridle than the wind the steed is born / Provoking and blazing; the man / is reined by life from his cradle"). Whereas "the steed" or the new verse, which Martí characterized in the prologue as "escultórico, vibrante como la porcelana, volador como un ave, ardiente y arrollador como una lengua de lava" is born free, the man is bridled by life from birth (2: 1364; "sculptural, vibrant as porcelain, airborne as a bird, fiery and devastating as a tongue of lava"; Allen 57). Admittedly, the anguish, pessimism, and the unadorned experiences of

"the wretched of the earth" Martí also conveyed in his writings can be perceived as naturalist tendencies. However, in his view, the reins of life represent conditions that control rather than determine man's existence. In effect, "el ala encumbradora / Ya en los ingentes brazos se diseña" to remind him that "[d]e nuestro bien o mal autores somos, / Y cada cual autor de sí" (2: 1385; "the lifting wing / is already designed in his immense arms"; "of our good and evil we are the creators, / And each of us is the creator of our own self"). Since "la queja / A la torpeza y la deshonra añade / De nuestro error," the poet insists on calling for self-determination to create and transform our existence, and for singing "[a]unque las hidras nuestro pecho roan, / La hermosura y grandeza de la vida!," endowing, thus, his realism with an existential and social dimension (Ibid; "the complaint / adds to the clumsiness and dishonor / of our mistake"; "[a]lthough the hydras gnaw / The beauty and greatness of life!").[77]

As the poem continues to unfold, Martí offers a re-presentation of the urban quotidian that contrasts with Whitman's. Whereas in Whitman's city we find "[t]he clean-hair'd Yankee girl works with her sewing-machine or in the factory or mill, / The

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[77] José Olivio Jiménez, studying existential notions and symbols in Martí's works, identifies "su ardorosa afirmación de la vida… su confianza en el poder del hombre como realizador o constructor de su propia existencia" and his acknowledgment "de la miserabilidad del hombre" as existential ideas (126; "fervent assertion of life… his confidence in the power of man as a maker or builder of his own existence"; "man's ignobility"). Jiménez criticizes notions of existentialism that reduce its scope to "doctrinas donde la victoria aplastante de la nada sobre el ser parece aportar la única definición aceptable de la existencia humana," pointing out that the "necesidad de situar al hombre viviente, y *viviéndose*, en el centro mismo de toda meditación filosófica" appears in Martí's works as well as in Unamuno's, Rodo's, and Antonio Machado's (124; "doctrines in which the overwhelming victory of the nothingness over the being seems to be the only acceptable definition of the human existence"; "the need of locating the living man, and who *lives himself*, at the very center of all philosophical reflection").

paving-man leans on his two-handed rammer, the reporter's lead flies swiftly over the note-book, the sign- painter is lettering with blue and gold / The canal boy trots on the tow-path […]" ("Song of Myself," Section 15, 201), Martí's city shows us

> [u]n obrero tiznado; una enfermiza
> Mujer, de faz enjuta y dedos gruesos;
> Otra que al dar al sol los entumidos
> Miembros en el taller, como una egipcia
> Voluptuosa y feliz, la saya burda
> En las manos recoge y canta, y danza;
> Un niño que sin miedo a la ventisca,
> Como el soldado con el arma al hombro,
> Va con sus libros a la escuela; el denso
> Rebaño de hombres que en silencio triste
> Sale a la aurora y con la noche vuelve,
> Del pan del día en la difícil busca.   (2: 1386)

> [a] sooty worker; a sickly
> Woman, with a gaunt face and thick fingers;
> Another woman at sunrise with the numb
> Limbs in the factory, like an Egyptian
> Voluptuous and happy, the coarse skirt
> She gathers up in her hands and sings, and dances;
> A boy that unafraid of the blizzard,

Like the soldier with the gun on his shoulder,
Goes with his books to the school; the compressed
flock of men that in sad silence
goes out at dawn and returns by night,
in the difficult quest for the daily bread.]

Although Martí's lines in *Ismaelillo* and *Versos sencillos* are more compressed than in *Versos libres*, he notably shifts his writing style in this part of the poem, producing shorter, less narrative and evocative, rather than symbolic, hendecasyllabic lines without changing the metric pattern. Unlike Whitman's "omnivorous" and nominalist lines, and yet similar to them in their contrapuntal nature, Martí's concise and suggestive lines articulate a Lezamian image that exposes the reverse of Whitman's portrayal of the emerging urban working class.

While Whitman registered the incorporation of women into the labor force either as seamstresses or as workers "in the factory or mill" as well as of children as the "canal boy" indicates, his enumeration of occupations says nothing about their experience as workers. In contrast to Whitman's "clean-hair'd Yankee girl" or the "paving-man" who ungrimed "leans on his two-handed rammer," Martí's "sooty worker," the sickly and gaunt woman, and the female worker whose limbs are numb due to the cold, while working at the factory, make apparent their condition of impoverishment. As his short stories and poems for children evince, Martí dedicated part of his *ouvre* to educate them "porque los niños son la esperanza del mundo" (2: 1208; "because the children are the hope of the world"). Although his view about gender roles was conventional since "el niño nace para ser caballero, y la niña nace para ser madre," he also considered that "[l]as

niñas deben saber lo mismo que los niños" (2: 1208; "the boy is born to be a gentleman, and the girl is born to be a mother;" "[t]he girls must know the same as boys"). Hence, unlike Whitman, who likely saw or knew about the children who worked in the enlargement of the Erie Canal in New York (1836-1862) and so captured their presence in "[t]he canal boy trots on the tow-path," Martí in his "Nueva estrofa" depicted "[l]os niños, versos vivos" as soldiers that undeterred by adversity also had to do their duty in the present, which was to study rather than work (201; 2: 1386; "[t]he children, living verses"). Likewise, while Whitman heard "the loud laugh of work-people at their meals" in the city, Martí saw the workers as a silent and compact "flock of men" whose suffering "[c]ual la luz a Memnom, mueven mi lira" (214; Ibid; "[l]ike the light to Memnon, drive my lyre").

Consequently, the workers, the children, and "los heroicos / Y pálidos ancianos […] / Astiánax son y Andrómaca mejores, / Mejores, sí, que las del viejo Homero" (Ibid; "the heroic / and pale elderly people […] / are Astyanax and better Andromache, / Yes, better than that of the old Homer"). They thus represent the warriors and anonymous heroes of the city, whose struggle for survival, as "the difficult quest for the "daily bread" highlights, constitutes the modern, urban epic (Ibid; "the heroic / and pale elderly people […] / are Astyanax and better Andromache, / Yes, better than that of the old Homer"). Without resorting either to description or to a linear narrative, while conflating impressionistic, existential and social realist aesthetic perspectives, Martí's loose poetic brush outlined an impression of urban life that crystallized the modern epic of urban workers. In his "Estrofa nueva" we find a Lezamian image that opened a parenthesis in cultural memory and poetic discourse by rendering visible not only the meager conditions

that urban workers faced in their quotidian lives, but also an unambiguous deflection from formalist notions of art. His poem evinces a distinct realism that, evoking rather than copying the reality he witnessed and experienced as a poor, urban immigrant worker, conveys a socio-political critique that denounces the workers' poverty and suggests it as the uneven and contradictory outcome of progress the city embodied. Likewise, as Rama noted, Martí's experience during the emergence of a "popular culture" in New York and his learning from realist art and literature and impressionist painting drove him to attempt to "disolver la dicotomía de lo bello-feo que, *de facto*, estaba construido sobre una jerarquía social y clasista" (130-131; "dissolve the dichotomy of beautiful-ugly, that was, *de facto*, built upon a social and classist hierarchy").

In so doing, he rejected the aestheticist sacralization of "the beautiful" without renouncing the singing of the beauty and joy of life, yet also singing its pathos and what was considered as "ugly." While the latter can be seen in his portrayal of the urban workers, and in his poem "Bien: Yo respeto…" ["Well: I respect…"] "[…] yo respeto / La arruga, el callo, la joroba, la hosca / Y flaca palidez de los que sufren," the former surfaces in the life asserting statements of the first part of the poem and in the woman that, in spite of the cold she endures due to the lack of enough clothing, sings and dances (2: 1425; "[…] I respect / The wrinkle, the callus, the hump, the rough / and thin paleness of those who suffer"). In this way, Martí's commitment to "los que sufren" and his efforts to remind us of "[l]a hermosura y grandeza de la vida" as well as of our individual freedom and will-power to take the reins of life in our hands so as to give our existence the direction we hope for, manifests the existential aspect of his poetic expression. It also demonstrates an epistemological, ethical, and aesthetic "directional causality" that

marrying ethics and aesthetics asserts a notion of art that refuses to disconnect from reality and its circumstances in its attempt to perfect them.

DICKINSON'S, MARTÍ'S, WHITMAN'S AND DARÍO'S LEZAMIAN IMAGES: GIVING GRAVITY AND DIRECTION TO INTER-AMERICAN MODERNISMS

As their writings show, Darío, Martí, Whitman, and Dickinson continued the dialogue with the world and its literatures that their predecessors began. Their turn toward the world became instrumental in not only advancing the ongoing process of modernization and cultural decolonization in the hemisphere, but it also served as counterbalance to nationalism and insularism. The global restructurings and the democratic and libertarian ethos that persisted during the second half of the nineteenth century showed that "[l]as ideas no hacen familia en la mente, como antes… No crecen en una mente sola, sino por el comercio de todas" (Martí 2: 446; "[i]deas do not form families in the mind, as before… They do not grow within a solitary mind but emerge through commerce among all ideas"; Allen 46). Our poets witnessed "una descentralización de la inteligencia," a democratization of knowledge that reasserted its collective nature and their predecessors' realization that America also constituted the world and, thus, that it was a legitimate heir and successor of the legacy of humanity (2: 447; "a decentralization of intelligence"; Allen 47). As Whitman stated, "[i]f we are not to hospitably receive and complete the inaugurations of the old civilizations, and change their small scale to the largest, broadest scale, what on earth are we for?" (1018). Such awareness, however, came along with the re-cognition that cultural emancipation and originality could be achieved through the rejection of servile imitation, the critical

employment of the past and the influences, and the use of the *ars combinatoria*. Our "children of the fire" assimilated the fire of freedom that ignited in the works of their predecessors and made it blaze in theirs. They thus indistinctly claimed for unrestrained freedom in poesis and creation to emancipate and renovate poetic discourse in the Americas and substantiated their own directional causalities, which gave sense and direction to the cultural modernization we know as modernism.

Dickinson, Whitman, Martí, and Darío exercised their individual freedom and sovereignty to create and "[u]nscrew the doors themselves from their jambs!" (Whitman 214). In so doing, they rebelled against the constraints that limited poetic creation and yielded "a liquor never brewed" that reoriented inter-American poesis from epistemological, aesthetic, and ethical perspectives (Dickinson Fr207). All our poets addressed the interrelations between the local and the global by devising distinguishing understandings of the world and ways of knowing it. Whereas Darío, in his late nineteenth-century poetry, placed the universal or the cosmopolitan over the local as a means to achieve universality, Whitman, Martí, and Dickinson privileged the local and also embraced the world. Unlike our male poets who forged an expansive outlook to know the world and reality that followed the cultural imperative of attaining a global vision and a dialectical synthesis, Dickinson was critical of the dialectical reasoning and strove to decenter uniformity and totality by accepting the existence of contradiction and creating a compressed angle of vision that exposed multiplicity. Their ways of seeing resulted in aesthetics that, despite their differences, reveal Whitman's idea of poetry as being "indirect and not direct or descriptive or epic" as a shared and common precept in the modernist inter-American poetic discourse (8). Dwelling in the threshold between

neoclassicism, romanticism, and their aesthetic modernizations, our poets were able to reimagine reality and create different modes of the mimetic that produced aesthetic directional causalities that were later furthered and consolidated by the poetic avant-gardes.

In Darío's capricious conflation of fantasy, reality, memory, and the world of dreams and "pre-memory," we observe a notion of poetry that explores and dialogues with the unconscious as a means to imagine and create the nonexistent. In going back to the orphic space or to that instant "de la supresión de los sentidos entre lo que nos pertenece y lo que tuvo un incomprensible rescate," which according to Lezama Lima is "[e]l primer encuentro de la poesía," Darío engendered a visionary poetics and a capricious realism that bring him close to the interests and aesthetic sensibility developed later by the surrealist avant-gardes ("La diginidad de la poesía" 49; "of the suppression of the senses between what we own and what had an incomprehensible rescue"; "[t]he first encounter of poetry"). In contrast to Darío, who created fantasy landscapes that indirectly derive from reality, Whitman, Dickinson, and Martí actively addressed reality and the quotidian. Whitman's intention to catch and emulate the fleeting expressions of human and modern life in his poetry resulted in an impressionistic and contrapuntal aesthetics that in being "developed concurrently with the earliest attempts at animated photography" not only brought about stylistic devices that, as Kenneth M. Price discusses, were used by early filmmakers, but also anticipated the glorification of speed, technology, and urban life that was later promoted by the futurist poets (Price 108, 112). His phrasal method constitutes a vital and transformative technique in his poetics that enabled him to disrupt language's hierarchies and free himself "del tiempo lineal

continuo, deteniéndolo para decidir su libertad," which he exercised to transform and re-present reality (Agamben qtd. in Bellessi 87; "from the continuous, linear time, stopping it to decide his freedom").

While all our poets experimented with poetic language, introducing formal and stylistic innovations, transformations, and transgressions in poetic discourse, Dickinson's engagement and manipulation of language prove to be the most radical. By going back to the roots of language, she stretched and violated its grammatical strictures, and contested practices of nominalization and objectification as seen in concepts and definitions. The latter, in addition to her disruption of logical thinking and linear progression, and the exaltation and resignification of the domestic space, criticize and challenge patriarchal language and culture. Her critique renders visible and substantiates her will to liberate language by unsettling its normativity with a poetic counter-"Hammer" and "unannointed Blaze," an endeavor that American avant-garde poets such as Gertrude Stein, César Vallejo, and Xul Solar (Oscar Agustín Alejandro Schulz Solari) continued and took further (Fr401). Likewise, in Dickinson's re-presentations of reality, we find "toques ligeros de invisibles causalidades" that in emphasizing architectural structures, producing multiples perspectives, and transforming natural form into geometrical equivalents give gravity to a slant, compressed, and geometrical style that would later unfold as cubism (Lezama Lima 55; "subtle touches of invisible causalities"). Lastly, while Martí's Protean writing style incorporates and merges literary techniques and aesthetics that all our poets used, his impressionistic outlines of reality give rise to a realism that by disrupting the opposition between the beautiful and the ugly and exposing injustice, the human condition and the pathos of life conveys an existential and social dimension that

inaugurates social realism and a modern tradition of social and politically committed literature in Spanish America.

Although in "Yo soy aquel" ["I am the one"] Darío admitted the issue of divorcing ethics from aesthetics in his previous works by declaring that "[l]a torre de marfil tentó mi anhelo; / quise encerrarme dentro de mí mismo, / y tuve hambre de espacio y sed de cielo,"[78] he was the only one among our poets that adopted a radical autonomist position (*PC* 532; [t]he ivory tower tempted my desires; / I tried to lock myself within me, / and got hungry for space and thirsty for sky"; Acereda and Derusha 163). Whitman, Dickinson, and Martí linked ethics and aesthetics, conveying a humanist notion of art that implies that "art can serve an ethical function, whether through overt moral teaching or some less cognitive form of instruction" (Jacobson 163). Admittedly, Whitman proclaimed himself as the voice of the uncelebrated "common people" of his country, or as the voice of the "strong melodious songs" of workers and of the "many long dumb voices, / Voices of the interminable generations of prisoners and slaves / Voices of the diseas'd and despairing" (174, 211). As David Simpson reminds us, populist rhetoric in the United States "had become so obligatory for the politicians of all parties since the late 1830s that… [e]veryone claimed to speak for the people, as they still do," which helps us to understand Whitman's silence with regard to the actual conditions of the "many long dumb voices" he claimed to represent (189). This tension between his depiction of reality and what he advocated does not necessarily constitute an aesthetic

[78] In this poem, which appeared in *Cantos de vida y esperanza* and was dedicated to José Enrique Rodó in response to his critique of his aestheticism, Darío revisits *Azul* and *Prosas profanas* criticizing "las sombras de mi propio abismo" or his flight from actuality (Ibid; "the shadows of my own abyss"; 163).

defect. However, it brings to the fore the concern about the eventual ethical effects that mystifying representations of reality that claim to be truthful can have on a given ethos, and an ethical inconsistency and defect that I find neither in Dickinson nor in Martí.

William Carlos Williams (1883-1963), discussing *Leaves of Grass* and Whitman's innovations in relation to the U.S. avant-gardes, stated that "[a]ll the discoveries and inventions which were to make the twentieth century exceed all others, for better or worse, were implicit in his works" (840). While we do not claim that either any one of our poets or they as a group did "all the discoveries and inventions" that contributed to modernize poetic discourse during the nineteenth and twentieth century in the Americas, we hope to have demonstrated that these four poets, as outstanding voices of their time, passed on epistemological, aesthetic, and ethical directional causalities in their oblique images that were essential for the modernizing endeavor continued by modernist and avant-garde poets in the Americas.

CONCLUSION

“Hope” is the thing with feathers –
That perches in the soul –
And sings the tune without the words –
And never stops – at all –

Emily Dickinson (Fr314)

The emergence of Western Europe as a global hegemon and the beginning of the processes of political and cultural independence in the Americas by the late eighteenth century mark historic junctures that have resulted in a reconfiguration of power relations that show the advance and imposition of universal notions of modernity that have been insistently challenged and reimagined. This dissertation has been concerned with this process of engagement, contestation, and reimagination of modernity’s hegemonic epistemologies and rhetorics manifested in inter-American poetic discourse during the nineteenth century. Through a re-vision of prose and poetic works by prominent modern and modernist poets, I have sought to explore ways which they contributed to build national and continental projects of political and cultural emancipation, to shape and transform their national literary traditions, and to articulate instantiations of decolonizing thinking that have reimagined the Americas and given substance to an alternative historic trajectory. In so doing, on the one hand, I intended to expose dialogues among the poets selected. I have attempted to analyze confluences and differences so as to dismantle mystifications and mythifications that reproduce hierarchical and exceptionalist notions of American poetry, to examine the unfolding of poetic discourse in the hemisphere and of the poets’ works, whether these have engaged in the perpetuation of European and US-

American cultural centrality, or in the veiling of contradictions. On the other hand, I aimed to trace what I call Lezamian images, that is, oblique poetic images that convey critical knowledges that were relegated and elided by the European and the emerging US-American hegemonic project of modernity, and render visible directional causalities that reoriented prevailing notions of democracy and poesis from epistemological, aesthetic, and ethical perspectives. These poetic images or “slants of light,” to echo Dickinson’s lexicon, not only give gravity to the nonexistent and point to an alternative historic sense that continues to enlighten ways to address the challenges we face in our twenty-first century modernities, but also integrate a symbolic inter-American counter-archive that stores marginalized knowledges, experiences, and imaginations that assert the epistemological and cultural plurality of the Americas.

Thus, the first chapter represents a gallery of foundational poetic images that, through the lens of the pastoral, introduced and contextualized the cultural, political, economic, and geopolitical restructurings that took place in the process of emancipation, nation-building, and the formation of national literatures during the first half of the nineteenth century. Analyzing modern pastorals by Andrés Bello, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Esteban Echeverría, Matthew James Chapman, and José María Heredia, I have sought to bring forth a distinct conflation of neoclassicism and romanticism that reveals manifold re-cognitions of America that reanimated and questioned its utopian character. While these re-cognitions proved to operate within the logos of the European Enlightenment and its modernity by reinforcing dominant rhetorics of civilization and progress that harmonized and subsumed conflicts and contradictions, they also evinced resignifications of the relations between nature and culture, and between the past, the tradition, and the

present, as well as aesthetic and formal experimentations, combinations, and transformations that strove to give rise to autochthonous poetic expressions. Their modern pastorals not only recast and poetically historicized America as *natura naturans*, as a modern Arcadia, and as an independent continent that began to dialogue as such with the world and its literatures, but also enacted new origins that revived the continent as future and poesis, giving it a real and ideal presence that, nonetheless, appeared disrupted by the tensions produced by unfulfilled ideals of freedom and democracy. Despite their differences, these pastorals performed a utopian function in which hope, imagination, and freedom concur in the articulation of aspirations and prefigurations that aimed to have an impact on reality and to create futurity.

In dialogue with the first chapter, the second and third chapters analyzed Lezamian images related to issues of freedom in democracy and in poesis in works by Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, José Martí, and Rubén Darío that show ways in which these poets unhinged the doors of the future from their jambs, to evoke Whitman's phrase. The second chapter focused on these poets' re-visions and resignifications of the universal abstracts of the European Enlightenment that supported the foundations and promises upon which the American nations were grounded, revealing liberalism and its democracy as complementary in the articulation of a universal political project that implies an interrelation between the national and transnational that is sustained by a politics of inequality and oppression that perpetuates asymmetrical power relations. Thus, I examined poetic images that show Dickinson's, Whitman's, Martí's, and Darío's engagements, confrontations, and reorientations from liberal democracy, as seen in its aporetic coupling of freedom and equality within the context of democratization of the

American republics and of imperialist expansionism that continued to develop during the second half of the nineteenth century. While Dickinson clamored for equality between the sexes and for women's full access to citizenship that foregrounded a critical exercise of individual freedom and sovereignty, dissent, and rebellion as constitutive of an individual and societal democratic self, Martí's, Darío's, and Whitman's involvement in hemispheric politics brought forth competing notions of democracy. In the face of the interventions and annexations carried out by the United States and England in the hemisphere and, consequently, of the violation of the freedom, the right to self-determination, and the Vattelian and international legal sovereignty of the Spanish American nation-states, Martí's and Darío's notions of democracy drew a dividing line between the nations that defended and supported a peaceful coexistence in the world, and those whose violence, ambition, and abuse of power sabotaged freedom and endangered the liberty of other nations. As I hope to have demonstrated, they joined efforts not only to defend and secure the political freedom and sovereignty of "Nuestra América" from (neo)colonialism and imperialism according to precepts of international right and law, but also to unmask the democracy purveyed by the U.S. as one that championed freedom as a privilege of the strongest, or of the most technologically developed nations, and that inscribed the transformation of violence, force, and injustice into a right.

Unlike Martí and Darío, Whitman's endorsement of the U.S. doctrine of Manifest Destiny led him to devise an idea of democracy that proves to be akin with the freedom furthered by his "America," that is, with a notion of democracy that, founded on an idea of right as force, regarded freedom as a privilege of the strongest nations and refused to recognize other American nations as equals and, therefore, as equally free to decided

their own destiny. Whitman's notion of expansive democracy, however, also conveys a sense of justice and ethical self-regulation that acknowledges that individualism, which is a constitutive element of his idea of freedom, could not secure and perpetuate democracy, though it includes a principle of love based on fraternity as a complement. Martí's notion of expansive, humanitarian, and peaceful freedom, however, is grounded on principles of equality, justice, right, law, and ethics that not only assert freedom as an inherent and universal right to which all individuals and nations are equally entitled, but that also advocate for mutual respect, the compliance with the dictums of international law, and a notion of love that implies ethical obligations and responsibilities owed to all human beings in order to achieve the common good and everybody's happiness. Addressing the question of democracy, our poets articulated directional causalities that brought to the fore epistemological and ethical reorientations that strove to disrupt the aporia between freedom and equality by imagining different notions of democracy that sought to achieve power balances among individuals and nation-states.

Building on the previous chapters, in the third chapter I have explored the interplay between freedom and poesis as expressed in discourses about creation, the world and its literatures, and in distinctive expressions of realism. In so doing, I analyzed Lezamian images that crystallize epistemological, aesthetic, and ethical directional causalities that indicate ways in which Dickinson, Whitman, Martí, and Darío furthered the process of modernization and cultural decolonization, and elaborated distinct aesthetics and poetics that gave rise to original modernist poetic expressions in the Americas. Our poets absorbed critical principles passed on by their precursors and continued the dialogue with the world and its literatures by re-cognizing that cultural

emancipation and originality could be achieved through the rejection of servile imitation, the critical use of the past, its influences, and their reconfiguration as *ars combinatoria*. In the process, they not only produced their own directional causalities that asserted creation and unbridled freedom in poesis as a means to achieve cultural autonomy, to renovate the poetic form, and to establish freedom as “la religión definitiva. Y la poesía de la libertad el culto nuevo,” but also devised distinguishing ways of seeing and understanding the world that unsettled the opposition between the local and the global (Martí 1: 1138; “the definitive religion, and the poetry of liberty the new form of worship”; Allen 187). Likewise, I have sought to bring to light how Dickinson’s, Whitman’s, Martí’s, and Darío’s distinct engagement with reality and the quotidian resulted in characteristic expressions of realism that substantiated different modes of the mimetic. While Darío’s late nineteenth-century poetry evinces a formalist stance that disconnected ethics from aesthetics, and a delinkage from actuality, Dickinson’s, Whitman’s, and Martí’s poetry brought ethics and aesthetics together, refusing to disconnect from reality and its quotidian circumstances. Our poets’ conflation of aesthetics, their formal and stylistic innovations, transformations, and transgressions in poetic discourse, in conjunction with their re-imaginations of reality resulted in distinct realisms that differed from mimetic representations of reality, giving gravity and anticipating aesthetics that were later consolidated by twentieth-century modernists and poetic avant-gardes.

The re-vision and examination of modern and modernist nineteenth-century inter-American poetic discourse I have pursued in this dissertation aim to give an account of manifold poetics that not only have configured and transformed modern American

literary traditions, but that have also reimagined the Americas, producing expressions of decolonizing thinking in the process. The Lezamian images I traced opened a parenthesis in discourse and cultural memory with their knowledges and cultural imaginations, crystallizing reorientations from modernity's logos and ethos that constitute a symbolic inter-American counter-archive whose poetic fragments can assist us to advance in a re-interpretation of modernity with a view to build what Enrique Dussel calls "trans-modernity." This project that emerges and is propelled by the "exteriority" of modernity or from what modernity "excluyó, negó, ignoró como insignificante, sinsentido, bárbaro, no cultura," proposes to undertake a re-vision that, considering the exclusions and "subsumiendo lo mejor de la modernidad europea y norteamericana que se globaliza, afirmará *fuera de ella componentes esenciales de sus propias culturas excluidas*, para desarrollar una nueva civilización futura, la del siglo XXI" (Dussel 222, 205; "excluded, denied, ignored as meaningless, nonsensical, barbarian, no culture"; "subsuming the best of the European and US-American modernity that globalizes itself will assert *from outside essential components of their excluded cultures* to develop a new future civilization, that of the XXI century").

As Martí claimed, "la salvación está en crear. Crear es la palabra de pase de esta generación," and it continues to be so (2: 110; "salvation lies in creating. Create is this generation's password"; Esther Allen 294). Dickinson's, Whitman's, Martí's, and Darío's Lezamian images show how imagination, *potens*, and praxis converge in a notion of poesis that underscores creation as a means to give gravity to the nonexistent, an opportunity to make the possible real and thus articulate a new futurity. Their oblique poetic images diverted from prevailing notions of democracy, offering a critical,

humanitarian, and peaceful democracy that not only entails directional causalities to propel change and justice, and to counterbalance inequality, injustice, and power imbalance, but that also advances the need of a resignification of humanism. Whether through their notions of democracy or through their aesthetics and poetics, our poets articulated ethical perspectives that aimed to redirect the dominant individualist ethos, and to bridge a reencounter with the *other* or "the not me" through solidarity, empathy, love, fraternity, and poetry. The complex and disastrous global and national current state of affairs that has resulted, on the one hand, from the unbridled power and ambition of transnational corporate capitalism, that is facilitated by the governments' servility to its interests, as well as from "rogue states" that have systematically violated the dictums of international right and law, and the sovereignty, freedom, and the right to self-determination of less militarily advanced nations under the banner of freedom and democracy. And, on the other hand, from our complacency and inaction as citizenry dramatize the urgency of addressing the aporias and the indeterminacy embedded in the concept of democracy, be they in the coupling of freedom and equality, or in the coupling of "a politico-juridical rationality and an economic-governmental rationality, a 'form of constitution' and a 'form of government,'" as Giorgio Agamben points out (4).

The need to resignify democracy and humanism so as to give existence to a critical, humanitarian, and peaceful democracy, and to a humanism that enables us to re-humanize humankind through a radical ethical code that brings us back to a collective "we" that is concerned with justice, the common good, and the well-being and happiness of all human beings remain as critical and as urgent as ever. "'Hope' is the thing with feathers," Dickinson told us; And, though our present constantly tempts us to surrender to

paralyzing and alienating hopelessness, our poets remind us that hope, creation, a critical exercise of our individual freedom and sovereignty, action, dissent, and rebellion against the status quo, continue to propel change and the possibility of articulating a new futurity.

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Comparative Literature, The Pennsylvania State University. 2016

MA. in English Literature, The Arizona State University. (Concentration in Comparative Literature). 2011

B.Ed. in Education and English, Universidad Metropolitana de Ciencias de la Educación, Santiago, Chile. 2006

Certificate in English for International Students, Mount Holyoke College. (Concentration in Literature). 2008

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

"Exhuming the Archive: Decolonizing History and Language in M. Nourbese Philip's *Zong!*." *American Comparative Literature Association*. New York City. March 2014.

"Mirando al futuro en el contexto post-dictatorial de Chile y Argentina en *Inri* de Raúl Zurita y *La rebelión al instante* de Diana Bellessi." IV Jornadas de cultura y literatura latinoamericana Palabra Abierta, A 40 Años de la Unidad popular y el golpe de estado en Chile, Universidad de Chile. Santiago. August 2013.

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Beca Chile, National Commission of Scientific and Technological Research (CONICYT); (tuition and living expenses for four years). 2011 – 2015

Portnoff Fellowship, Arizona State University. 2010 – 2011

Beca Chile, National Commission of Scientific and Technological Research (CONICYT); (tuition and living expenses for two years). 2009 – 2011

Foreign Fellowship, Mount Holyoke College; (tuition and board for one year). 2007 – 2008

TEACHING

Universidad Alberto Hurtado, Santiago, Chile. English Department. 2009
Instructor of writing and composition.

La Virgen de Pompeya School, Santiago, Chile. 2008
Teacher of English for ESL students of primary and secondary education.

Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, MA. Spanish Department. 2007 – 2008
Instructor SPA101.

Boston School, Santiago, Chile. 2007
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