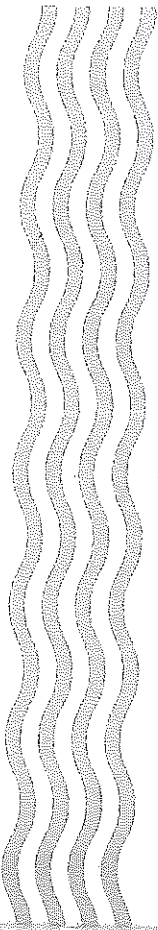


ON BECOMING
Cuban

A decorative graphic consisting of several horizontal, wavy lines that resemble water or a stylized horizon, positioned below the title.

IDENTITY, NATIONALITY, AND CULTURE

Louis A. Pérez Jr.

The University of North Carolina Press *Chapel Hill & London*

4

POINTS OF CONTACT, SOURCES OF CONFLICT

When one speaks of the *centrales* of the dominant power of North American capital, one usually assumes that the radius of their operation is limited to the production of sugar and close relations with *colonos*. . . . This is far from reality. Each *central* situated in the bowels of our countryside consolidates the entire economic system of its region and dominates it politically and economically. The administrator has at his disposal all the public functionaries and security forces. And against them neither the law nor any protest is practical.

—Levi Marrero, February 25, 1937

Here [Banes] . . . were luxurious lawns and impressive tropical homes. Here American and Cuban employees of United Fruit played polo, swam in their pleasant swimming pools, and shopped in boutiques for American goods, which arrived regularly and smartly by ship. Here one found . . . a burgeoning and upward-striving middle class of Cubans who lived like Americans, prayed like Americans . . . and expected more out of life like Americans. Banes had more ties to New York than to Havana. . . . Everybody used the beaches and the golf courses, and on the Fourth of July, the Americans and the Cubans held a huge picnic at the American Club. . . . Life was fun in Banes, life was positivistic, life was American and therefore the future!

—Georgie Anne Geyer, *Guerrilla Prince*, 1991

We are being invaded—and you know it—by Methodists, Baptists, Jehovah's witnesses and Christian Scientists. North American Bibles are part of the furniture of our rich houses, like Mary Pickford's photograph in a silver frame, rubber stamped with her familiar "Sincerely yours." We are losing all our character.

—Alejo Carpentier, *El recurso del método*, 1974

We have been very much pained by samples of Protestant civilization given to the Cubans by fellow Americans. . . . A U.S. naval ship has been stationed in the harbor for several days, and the sailors give terrible illustrations of what vile liquor will make of man. Drunking, carousing, gambling, singing, shouting, entering houses and insulting women, breaking windows, shutters, etc. It makes our faces tingle with shame. And the Cuban does not know any better than to take them for typical Americans. What can they think of us?


—May Mather Jones, Quaker Missionary, Gibara, February 1901

Among us he who wishes to be heard needs to be brief, very brief—unless he talks about baseball.

—José Antonio Ramos, *Extractos*, 1913

Baseball was a serious matter. One time, the Cienfuegos ball club brought a black ball player from the American Negro League to strengthen the team, and the poor guy made an error and Cienfuegos lost the game. They had to take the guy out under cover and accompanied by 20 or 30 policemen for the people had concluded that he had been bought and wanted to kill him.

—José B. Fernández, *Los abuelos: Historia oral cubana*, 1987



The North American presence derived much of its moral authority from its capacity to implicate vast numbers of Cubans in its purpose. In some cases it could create an environment in which alternatives were all but inadmissible. The authority of U.S. corporations, in particular, extended across the island and nowhere with greater effect than in the communities of the interior. A single corporation often represented the principal economic activity of a region, which meant that it was the major employer as well as the primary source of revenue in the form of payroll, taxes, and local buying power. For this reason, the corporation was in a position to arrange the pace and purpose of daily life around its own needs.

THE MEANING OF THE MILL

Communities were transformed into company towns, managed and maintained as a function of North American interests. The Cuban Portland Cement Company in Mariel owned the houses of its one thousand employees. Portland provided utility services, including running water and electricity, and local transportation. North American personnel lived comfortably on Cayo Masón on Mariel Bay, in cottage-style residential neighborhoods with access to the company school staffed by U.S. teachers, a local post office, a hospital, and a commissary. Other corporate enclaves appeared in the mining centers operated by the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, U.S. Steel Corporation, Freeport Sulphur Company, and Eastern Steel Company, dominating the towns of El Caney, Firmeza, Daiquirí, Ponupo, Felton, Nicaro, and Bayamo.

Perhaps the most powerful and certainly the most pervasive corporate presence could be felt at the sugar mill. U.S. control over sugar production increased rapidly after Spanish rule ended. As early as 1899, R. B. Hawley purchased the Tinguaro mill near Colón and the Mercedita property in Cabañas. Hawley organized the Cuban-American Sugar Company and established the Chaparra sugar mill in Puerto Padre; he subsequently bought San Manuel and Delicias. U.S. investors acquired 80,000 acres near Santa Cruz del Sur and formed the Francisco Sugar Company in 1901. William Van Horne, on incorporating the

Cuba Company in New Jersey in 1900, proceeded to acquire 300,000 acres on which to construct 350 miles of railroad and organize the Jatibonico and Jobabo sugar mills. The United Fruit Company built the Preston and Boston mills on hundreds of thousands of acres of land it obtained in northeastern Oriente. Within a decade of Cuban independence, virtually the entire northern coast of Oriente had passed into the hands of North American sugar corporations.

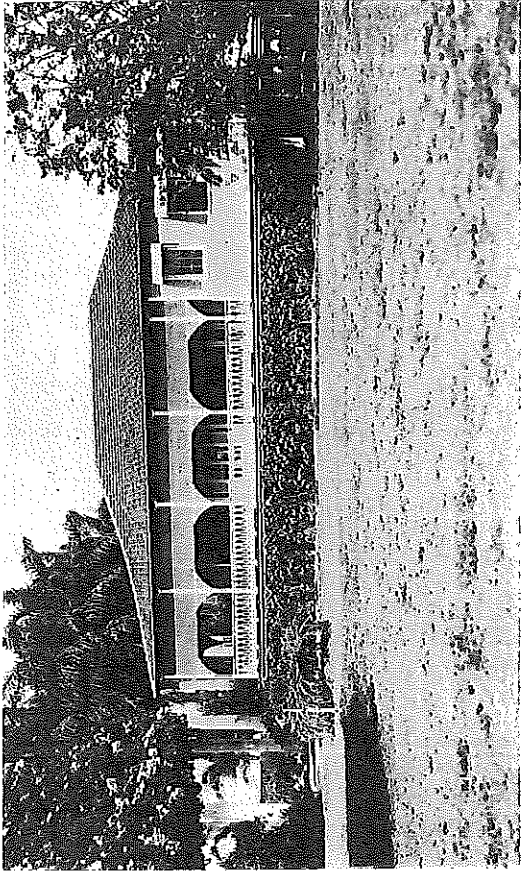
North American interests proliferated across the island. The Niquero mill was constructed by the New Niquero Sugar Company. The Warner Sugar Refining Company, established in 1906, acquired the Miranda, Amistad, and Gómez Mena mills. Edwin F. Atkins consolidated family holdings near Cienfuegos around the Soledad, Florida, and Trinidad mills. The Atlantic Fruit Company took over the Tánamo mill, the Matanzas Sugar Company purchased the Jesús María mill, and Thomas A. Howell (West Indies Sugar Corporation) assumed control of Alto Cedro, Cupey, Santa Ana, and Palma mills in Oriente. In 1916 the newly organized Cuba Cane Sugar Corporation took possession of seventeen fully equipped mills, including Mercedes, San Ignacio, Jagüeyal, and Lugareño. Four years later Milton Hershey completed construction of the new Hershey mill in Matanzas and subsequently acquired Rosario and Carmen. In Matanzas province George Loft of Loft Candies bought the Dulce Nombre mill, and Hires and Company acquired Dos Rosas. Other mills passed to the North Americans: Jaronú and Cunagua (American Sugar Refining Company), Macareño (Caribbean Sugar Company), Punta Alegre, Baraguá, Tacajó, and Báguanos (Punta Alegre Sugar Company), Vertientes, Pilar, and Estrella (General Sugar Company), Isabel and Los Caños (Guantánamo Sugar Company).

Within twenty-five years of the founding of the republic, U.S. control of sugar production was the most salient feature of the Cuban economy. North American ownership increased from 29 mills in 1905, accounting for 21 percent of the production, to 64 mills in 1916, representing 53 percent of the harvest, to 75 mills in 1926, accounting for 63 percent of total production.¹

North American mills created within their jurisdiction self-contained communities managed as facets of corporate operations, directed largely by North American personnel. The mill town (*batey*) assumed the appearance and character of a small city—"distant little cities implanted in each sugar mill and its environs," commented one observer. The sugar factory was surrounded by office buildings, machine shops, and foundries; some distance beyond were homes, schools, churches, and hospitals; hotels, banks, and retail shops; baseball fields, tennis courts, and golf courses; social clubs and theaters. Such enclaves replicated the customs and class divisions of home and were largely indifferent to the world of Cubans beyond them. An estimated 27,000 people lived on United Fruit property. "The company employees lived in a self-contained environment particularly in the Preston where I resided," recalled Richard Smith, who grew up at United Fruit. "The company provided housing, transportation, shopping

facilities (mostly food), water, milk, social clubs, golf and tennis facilities, horseback riding and plenty of beaches. There was rarely a need for the company employees to venture much beyond the confines of the plantation." George Braga could boast of the Rionda corporate holdings, two-thirds the size of Rhode Island, which included eight sugar plantations. "On them . . . lived some 40,000 people," according to Braga. "The maintenance of the mill towns, the schools, the hospitals, the churches, all came under our supervision and were our responsibility." Chaparra consisted of nearly six hundred homes, churches, six schools, one hotel, three movie theaters, a Masonic lodge, a dry cleaner, a telegraph and post office, a pharmacy, a dental clinic, and a company hospital; it was "without exaggeration one of the finest in the republic, after those of Havana." Journalist Carlos Martí described Chaparra as a "flourishing and prosperous population" that had acquired "a manner of living according to the needs of modern civilized life," including "comfortable and modern [houses] equipped with electricity provided by the company." All the homes possessed "a supply of drinkable water in sufficient quantity for all their needs, provided by an aqueduct constructed by the company, with each house having installed a plumbing system and shower outlets to meet all the needs of the residents." Eva Canel agreed. "Chaparra is almost totally urbanized," she affirmed: "It has very wide streets on which families gather; there are modest homes and elegant *chalets*. There is a very comfortable hotel where employees eat well at prices imposed by the company. There is bustle, there is movement: men of all kinds, races, and types, women well dressed, flirtatious, and as daring as in Havana."²

North American personnel lived in segregated quarters, districts known variously as *la zona americana* or *el barrio americano*. They existed as ideal reproductions of home—"a little segment of North America set down on the edge of vast rolling fields of cane," commented William McFee in his short story "At the Villa Agostino" (1935). In 1960 Warren Miller visited Nicaro and observed how much it looked "like the Pennsylvania of my childhood." Neighborhoods where the North Americans had formerly lived had "trees and gardens, lawns, big houses." The batey replicated the "American way of life," with all the conventions and conveniences of home. "Employees' residences stand along both sides of the clean, graded street where shade trees are planted," observed Irene Wright of the Boston mill. "Facing on this street is a ball ground, where the children romp. There are also tennis courts. Opposite the main office building is a park." Corporate executives occupied spacious homes—*chalets*, the Cubans called them—with gardens and lawns, often attached to golf courses and tennis courts, with access to exclusive country clubs. The North American zone of the Palma mill was "magnificent," with "elegant *chalets* built on splendid avenues. . . . It is entirely possible to imagine that one is in the aristocratic neighborhood of some great capital." The size and location of homes mattered, of course, for they served to fix the social demography of the batey. "Here the manager has his



Home of the administrator of the Jatibonico sugar mill, Camaguey province, ca. 1920. (Courtesy of the McKeldin Library University of Maryland at College Park)

sumptuous dwelling," noted Harry Franck, "his heads of departments their commodious residences, the host of lesser American employees their comfortable screened houses shading away in size and location in the exact gradations of the local social scale."³

North Americans created model communities, giving attention to symmetry and structure, balance and order, always with a larger purpose: to affirm power and progress. The community at Hershey was, in fact, called the "Model Town." "Its 200 or more attractive bungalows," observed T. Philip Terry, "stand in symmetrical squares flanking gardens that face shaded avenues aflame with tropical flowers." The Model Town was fully equipped with telephones, electric lights, theaters, dancing pavilions, an amusement park, a baseball field, and the company Hershey Hotel—"all the requisites of a modern American town," proclaimed Terry. "Typical of the larger American-owned mills of Cuba," was the way Charles E. Chapman recalled Hershey. "Everything about the place is spic and span,—good mill, ball-field, neat cottages, and attractive grounds."⁴

Mill towns symbolized the promise of the "American way of life," having to do with a high standard of living, good health, and well-being. From Hershey, Herbert Lanks wrote:

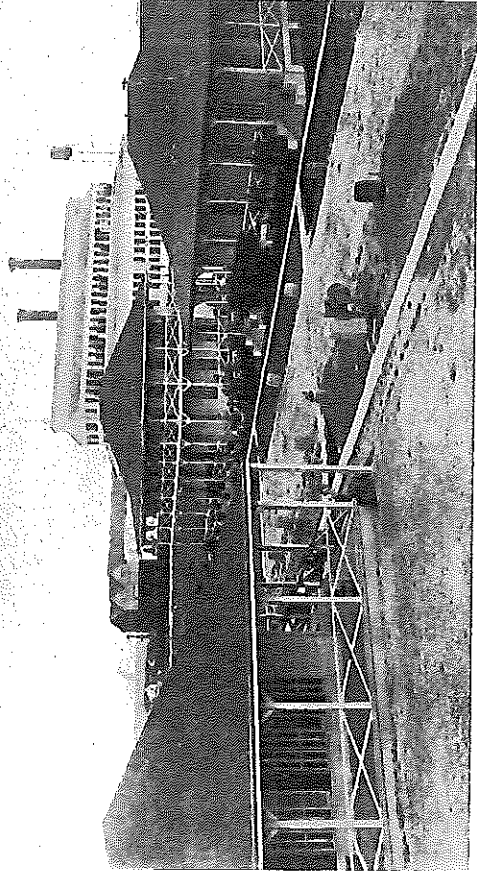
At the model plan in Hershey the company has done much to help its employees toward a higher standard of living. Comfortable modern homes have been built for them, making the town a model for the whole countryside. Various clinics as well as education and social services have been established to go with the physical improvements. A clear attempt has been made to raise

the children to a higher standard of living, and the result was particularly noticeable in the appearance of the children on the streets. Whereas in other towns and villages there are always a number of ill-kempt street urchins begging for money, here all are well dressed, playing together in an orderly manner, and with respectful answers to questions when spoken to.⁵

Preston was a model New England community, with paved, curbed, and tree-lined streets, hotels, bungalow-style homes with lawns and gardens, possessing "all the accompaniments of a comfortable American town," wrote Terry. "I was proud of Preston for various reasons," exulted Sydney Clark, "all summed up in one, namely that the community was *kept up*. The streets were in repair, the dwellings neat and well painted. Each dwelling had a lawn and the grass was cut, the hedge trimmed. . . . Neatness, promptness, cleanliness, snap were obviously the planks of the Preston platform."⁶

To Cubans, the North American communities suggested an idyllic existence: comfort and convenience combined with leisure and luxury, a way of life that appealed to Cuban sensibilities. One visitor to the Francisco mill described 130 houses "with gardens, well-aligned and freshly painted," of "American construction of wood," and "everything very pretty, very poetic, very chic." The North American mill town of Rafael Estenger's youth appeared in his novel *El pulpo de oro* (1954): "The streets were straight and clean, without deep ruts or pot holes, without flies buzzing around in the shop or café." Walfredo Rodríguez Blanca described one community with "luxurious *bungalows*, surrounded by trees, with spacious patios, often a tennis court and manicured lawns on wide streets. . . . In some houses there are even pools and houses that are mosquito-proof."⁷

The North Americans' privileged existence stood in sharp contrast to the surrounding everyday Cuban reality. Disparities assumed many forms and often appeared in the most unremarkable manner. Rodríguez Blanca's allusion to screens was significant. Few fixtures associated with U.S. households seemed to rankle Cubans more than screens (*tela metálica*). Screens were as ubiquitous as they were conspicuous. They were, of course, quintessentially colonial, something that most Cubans could not have articulated explicitly but instinctively suspected. That screens were identified with privilege was certain. But the issue was more complicated. Screens suggested aloofness, a way that North Americans distanced themselves from the daily experience of living in Cuba. On arriving in Hormiguero in 1946, Katherine Ponvert found the "housekeeping facilities" in the *casa de vivienda* to be "backward, unsanitary, extravagant and generally unworkable." Ponvert did not hesitate: "I settled down to making plans for modernization. . . . My first act was to screen the whole kitchen wing, including the long open gallery leading from the dining-room to the kitchen. [Chef] Eulogio claimed this made it airless! But I insisted, preferring less air and thousands less flies." The North American houses in Preston, observed Luis Felipe



The Preston *batey* of the United Fruit Company, with the sugar mill in the background. (From Frederick U. Adams, *Conquest of the Tropics* [New York, 1914].)

Rodríguez, had "a very disciplined look and very *snob*. The principal residences were enveloped by screens, probably to keep mosquitos from entering and prevent Liborio from looking in."⁸

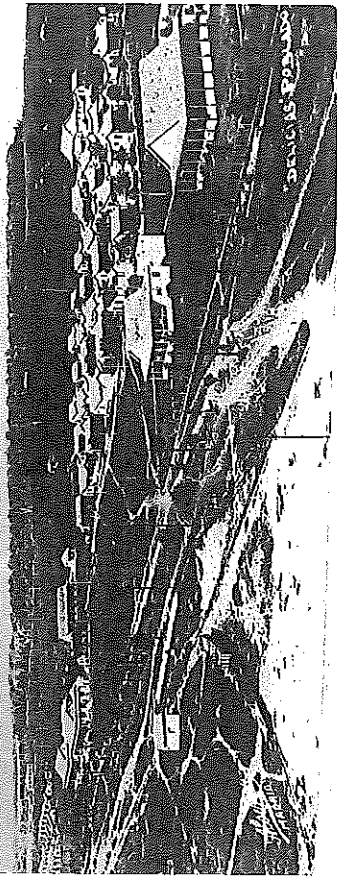
The use of screens was one of many markers that delineated the great social distances between the "American way of life" and Cuban life. "Windows defended by screens," observed Armando Leyva, "where they lived very well indeed." Communities coexisted, often contiguously, but they were unmistakably different. Banes was divided into two well-defined sectors separated by the Banes River: the *barrio Americano* for United Fruit personnel of the Boston mill and the Cuban zone. Erna Fergusson, who visited Banes in 1946, described it as possessing "its own set-up for human living on a civilized scale." She continued: "It is always fun to visit one of these transplanted patches of the United States in a foreign land; they are so much alike, so altogether like home. Wide porches with screens, doors that really catch and shut tight, rows of high-backed rocking chairs; indoors all the home magazines, ping-pong tables, an out-of-tune piano, and a faint scent of antiseptic." Fergusson was quick to note the differences between what she called "company town" and "Cuban town." Company town reminded her of "any garden village at home with flower and vegetable beds, a lawn, clotheslines and a driveway." She observed "young people . . . coming home from tennis or swimming, older people from golf, pianos sounded from the houses and chatting from the screened porches." Fergusson concluded: "This was the way salaried folk live." Cuban town appeared "pleasantly colonial," where people gathered in the evening by "long windows with iron grills," inside "lighted rooms with tiled floors, tidies on pianos and tables . . . and painted or

plaster saints on the walls." The homes in a company town were adorned with "hibiscus and butterfly bushes and rampant bougainvillea, royal purple or candent red"; the homes in Cuban town had "artificial flowers in tall vases."⁹

On visiting the North American zone, Alberto Quadreny wrote, he could hardly contain his astonishment: "It appears that we have entered another country. All the houses were beautifully constructed and well painted, . . . doors and windows covered with screens to keep out flies and mosquitos, with gardens, some of them as fine as those of Vedado and some parts of Havana and Marianao." Many of the schools and shops were "as good as in the capital," with railroad lines—"the finest railroads in Cuba"—that were "vastly superior to our public railroads." A month after Quadreny published his article, Rafael Rojas Domínguez wrote to *Carteles* about the other Banes. "I am familiar with all the zones that Quadreny writes about," Rojas Domínguez explained. "I do not know of any sewerage or of the paved streets that he mentions. Those cute houses with screens . . . no doubt exist, but the people who live there with all the comforts of modern life are the high officials. And how do 80 percent of the workers of those mills live? In miserable thatched huts, with sad and starving children, full of parasites and tormented by hunger: senior United Fruit employees live in those expensive houses at the cost of this misery."¹⁰

Carlos Forment also distinguished the "American Banes" from the "Cuban Banes." The American Banes was a community of "*chalets* and *burgalows*, each one surrounded by a garden, on wide cement-paved streets always meticulously maintained clean. Inside each home was found: a refrigerator, a radio, curtains, windows doubly protected by glass and screens, bathrooms and abundant water that runs through indoor faucets." Evenings were filled with "gatherings, visiting, music, cocktails, and week-end promenades." The Cuban Banes, on the other hand, created "the opposite impression," with "the cleanliness of the streets ignored, unpaved, homes with faded paint, a small park inadequate for the needs of the community, and a city government that can no longer continue with so many expenses."¹¹

The power of the mill extended far beyond the confines of the batey, inevitably drawing on the surrounding communities to meet North American objectives. The extent to which this proximity and ensuing familiarity shaped Cuban life is incalculable. Indeed, at times the capacity of the mill to transform the human and material environment seemed unlimited. Corporate entities played an important role in disseminating North American cultural forms, all as a function of "doing business," to be sure, but with the net effect of introducing into remote areas of the island "modern" ways, to which countless Cubans became accustomed. Cuban-American Sugar transformed Puerto Padre. Before 1900, Carlos Martí wrote, the region was largely "unworked savannas and overgrown woods . . . upon which had been raised a prosperous and flourishing community, in whose confines are found all the necessities of modern civiliza-



Panoramic view of the Delicias residential zone, ca. 1920s. (Courtesy of the photographic archives, *Bohemia*, Havana)

tion." Martí marveled at the sights he beheld. "The lines of its streets and the constructions all corresponded to the present epoch of advance and industrial and urban progress," he affirmed. "All the sidewalks are made of cement. Public lighting is provided by the electrical plant at the Delicias mill." In Camagüey, Santa Cruz del Sur was practically a Francisco company town. Many of the 60,000 residents depended on the mill for employment. The company introduced electricity, operated an ice factory, and provided mail and telegraph service.¹²

The mill was arguably the single most dominant factor in the life of neighboring towns and cities. It created an environment that possessed the means and commanded the resources to refashion the moral and material world of the tens of thousands of men and women who resided within its reach. Mills supplied the jobs and the payroll on which many local residents depended. "The Atlantic Fruit Company is the staff of life for Sagua de Tánamo," commented a traveler in 1915. More than 5,000 local residents worked at Atlantic's Tánamo mill. Almost all employment in Santa Cruz del Norte (pop. 3,500) was linked to Hershey. Morón (pop. 86,000) was dominated by Cuba Cane. The town of Vertientes did not exist until the construction of the mill of the same name and on which it became totally reliant. United Fruit controlled three-quarters of the land of the *municipio* of Banes and half of Mayarí, a territory encompassing almost 300 square miles. Few, indeed, were the families of Banes (pop. 20,000) and Mayarí (pop. 61,000) whose livelihood was unconnected to United Fruit. The "entire country surrounding Nipe Bay," asserted an observer as early as 1912, "including the towns of Saetia, Felton, Preston and Banes, is owned outright by American

corporations. . . . In other words, every human being in this district is either an employee of, or a contractor for the United Fruit Company or the Spanish American Iron Company."¹³

The mills had other effects, many of which reached deeply into local sensibilities. Perhaps it could not have been otherwise. The sugar company summoned into existence a moral order that required varying degrees of accommodation and emulation to achieve a livelihood and well-being. Cubans were obliged to deal with the mill on its terms. This meant, of course, acceptance of the dominant corporate modalities, including business methods and management style. But it implied more, for this comportment was necessarily related to a value system that insinuated itself into virtually all aspects of Cuban life.

In ways too many to calculate, often with consequences too complex to contemplate, the mill acted as a powerful transmitter of North American cultural forms. Holidays regulated much of the social life of the mill, including Christmas, Washington's Birthday, the Fourth of July, and Thanksgiving. Residents of the mill communities were drawn into North American commemorations, as well as parties, picnics, and parades and dances, banquets, and receptions. James Gould Cozzens incorporated his memories of Tuinicú at Christmas time in *Cock Pit* (1928), where "a full Christmas day" was observed with a party for children, "with an authentic Christmas tree, shipped at some expense from lands where Christmas trees grow," and "brilliantly decked and set about with small hills of toys." Local town dignitaries were frequently guests at these functions. The American Club of Preston invited local elites of Banes, Antilla, and Mayarí to participate in Fourth of July celebrations. Movie theaters operated in almost all mill communities, and almost all featured U.S. films. Chaparra had two theaters, which, Carlos Martí observed, were at "the high level of those in the capital with regard to films shown."¹⁴

Sugar corporations occupied an important position in local commerce. Many mills acquired foreign trade privileges through subports that received merchandise directly from U.S. suppliers from which it was distributed throughout the mill retail network. "As we now have our own port," reported the manager of the Manatí Sugar Company, "no doubt we shall import many goods, and after we complete the [railroad] line to Lagunas, we shall import considerable merchandise for Tunas and other points." Remote rural communities obtained access to foreign imports through company stores. Household products, consumer goods, clothing, tools, machines, and foodstuffs were distributed through retail outlets managed by sugar mills. George Braga recalled that the company store at Tuinicú was stocked with "saddles, French perfumes, liqueurs, whiskey, boots, bolts of cotton and silk, yokes for oxen, machetes, watches, live birds, beans, canned goods and rum." The volume of retail sales at Preston, mainly in the form of groceries, clothing, hardware, and household merchandise, was valued at more than \$700,000 annually. United Fruit operated a total of seven retail stores

dealing almost exclusively in U.S. products. The Cuban-American Sugar retail department at Chaparra received all its merchandise from the United States. "Nothing that these enterprises consume," commented a Cuban journalist regarding Cuban-American Sugar mills, "comes from the country, but is all imported from abroad." The combined retail sales of the three Cuban-American Sugar mills (Chaparra, Delicias, and San Miguel) exceeded \$2 million annually.¹⁵

Local consumption patterns were transformed by the distribution of U.S. food products, beverages, clothing, and household goods. The company store was a place where "a ruddy-complexioned *yanquis* offered canned wonders with foreign names," wrote Dora Alonso. Katherine Ponvert remembered the retail business of Hormiguero: "When the farmers have some spare ready cash, they ride into the batey and buy their favorite fare—American canned goods. One delightful character of the batey, named Fundoro, told . . . with pride that his child didn't drink orange juice, he provided canned apple juice for him." Gonzalo Mazas Garbayo's short story "Mi señorita" (1930) alludes to one of the many ways these transformations occurred: "In the grocery store of the mill, the commercial instincts of the owners—to ingratiate the Americans—led to the substitution of guava bars for cans of marmalade bearing the name of a millionaire from Chicago."¹⁶

These changes were particularly evident in the towns surrounding the sugar corporations, including Banes, Puerto Padre, Palma Soriano, and Santa Cruz del Norte, among many others. "In no Cuban town is the American influence as noticeable as Banes," observed Carlos Forment. It was "a bilingual city," with retail stores selling U.S. products and catering to North American tastes. But Banes was also different in the attitudes and values of its citizens. "The Cuban people here offer an admirable example," wrote Forment, "influenced by the Saxon spirit, adopting its virtues of saving, of comfort, and confidence in their own effort." Contact with North Americans had "propelled Cubans toward success and self-improvement, in victorious competition of efforts that defines definitively our superiority when we resolve to improve ourselves."¹⁷

Local dependencies developed in other ways. In a budgetary environment where national expenditures to meet provincial needs were notoriously inadequate, municipal governments were always alive to the opportunity to obtain additional revenue. Mills often functioned as dispensers of resources and sources of patronage, as philanthropic agencies and agents of good deeds. U.S. companies made contributions for civic improvements, social services, and community charities, including orphanages, schools, clinics, and recreation. Many of them operated scholarship programs for college educations in the United States. Mills often subsidized public works. United Fruit donated \$50,000 to the city of Banes for the construction of a sewerage system. Sancti-Spiritus honored the Tuinicú mill for the "philanthropic work" that "gave life and powerful support to the municipal treasury."¹⁸

The mill created an environment where North American structures prevailed, where the formal and informal networks of power and persuasion combined to define the terms of social interaction. The company could reasonably assume that philanthropy would be accepted with appreciation and repaid with gratitude, always implying a measure of indebtedness that could best be liquidated through acquiescence to the mill's interests. This was a way to preempt protest and prevent opposition. Years later Katherine Ponvert recounted her uncle's reaction to the attempts to form a labor union at Hormiguero:

Don Elie felt justifiably that he had always paid the highest wages and given his employees the most benefits. Our batey families had always received free electricity, free ice and free milk. Countless men, their wives and children had been helped and financed through illnesses; their houses were maintained; their parks and surroundings, already beautifully landscaped, were kept up. We provided a primary school and a church service on Sunday at the chapel. Don Elie was truly and personally hurt, and I do not think he ever thought out the rest of his life quite recovered from the shock and disappointment of this movement.¹⁹

In *Vendaval en los cañaverales* (1937), Alberto Lamar Schweyer describes a strike against the "Goldenthal Sugar Company" when Mr. Goldenthal is urged by his niece to summon the authorities: "What do you care what the Cubans say? Forget them! Didn't you do what you could for them? Haven't you created ten scholarships for the children of your employees to study in the United States? Didn't you concern yourself every year when you went to Palmares to distribute toys to the children? If they are not happy with this, what more can you do for them?"²⁰

Cubans gained access to the realm of the mill through different points of entry. An inexorable reciprocity linked the mill to neighboring communities, reinforced by local institutions, mutual needs, and common interests. Missionaries played an important part in this order. Many U.S. mills promoted evangelical projects and early enlisted the Protestant presence to serve the mill's interests. The United Fruit Company dispensed land, construction materials, and financial support to establish Quaker churches and schools in Holguín, Gibara, Banes, and Puerto Padre.²¹ United Fruit also provided Methodists with three hundred acres, water, and electricity at no charge to establish the Agricultural and Industrial School at Guaro. Hershey sponsored a Presbyterian agricultural school in Aguacate. The Episcopalian Brooks Home and School in Guantánamo was subsidized by the Guantánamo Sugar Company. Episcopalians also operated a secondary school on the property of Constanacia Sugar Company.

Under the circumstances, missionary schools were obliged to help integrate Cubans into North American structures and the larger normative system on which they were based. The Methodist school at Guaro received operating subsidies from United Fruit, Atlantic Gulf Sugar, and Bethlehem Steel, whose repre-

sentatives served on the school board and determined policy regarding admission, curriculum, personnel, and so forth. Students were socialized to view as normal—and to survive and succeed in—an environment shaped by the primacy of North American interests, to which they could obtain access only after having mastered the appropriate skills and attitudes. The Methodist Agricultural and Industrial School taught English and introduced students to North American methods, thereby preparing them for employment with United Fruit. "The training afforded the boys," observed Irene Wright, "is intended to form them into competent employees." Students came to know United Fruit officials, recalled Edgar Nesman, the former director of the Methodist school, and "were looked upon kindly because they had graduated from the United Fruit-sponsored school." José Reyes completed his education at the Quaker school in Puerto Padre and was immediately hired by Chaparra. Among those in the graduating class of 1912–13 of the Quaker school in Banes was Fulgencio Batista, who promptly obtained a job in the railroad department of United Fruit.²²

Missionaries occupied an anomalous place in this world. Whether by choice or by chance, they often found themselves serving the mill's interests. Protestant ministers and mill personnel mingled, they collaborated and reinforced each other's presence; in the process, large numbers of Cubans were drawn into the value system around which everyday life was experienced. "We are a little world to ourselves," reflected Quaker missionary Zenas Martin from Banes in 1902.²³ But it was also a complex world, an extensive network of mutual interests maintained in delicate equilibrium, governed by unstated assumptions and shared notions of what was normal. The realm of the mill was sustained by interlocking needs and overlapping interests. None of this was necessarily insidious, of course. Rather, people came to terms with reality and seized opportunities wherever they found them. It simply happened that the terms of that reality were largely defined by North Americans.

This is not to suggest that missionaries were never troubled by the anomaly of their circumstances. The defense of Cuban well-being often forced missionaries to confront the privileged place of foreign capital. North American hegemony was rarely monolithic, and even the consensual context of domination was subject to conflicting interests and competing needs. Many missionaries were decent men and women of conscience who played an important if unwitting role in discrediting structures inimical to Cuban interests.

This was a complex process. Missionaries in pursuit of their goals could not long remain indifferent to the excesses of North American hegemony and in the process contributed to subverting the power of its assumptions, although it is far from clear that this was their intent. Methodists seemed especially troubled by their association with United Fruit, unable to reconcile their commitment to the social gospel with the abuse and exploitation they confronted daily. The Reverend Paul Acker could not contain his disgust in Preston, "where we American

business people draw the resources from the land, but do not identify ourselves with the people," adding: "The Cuban nationals live like animals and we are doing practically nothing to help them raise their standard of living." Richard Milk, director at Guaro, often complained of "the abuse of foreign business firms" and of "feeling daily and hourly the shadow of one of the world's greatest imperialistic concerns virtually dictating every movement and almost one's very thoughts." Edgar Nesman recalled "the righteous indignation" of the Guaro staff, "indignation at injustice, exploitation, immorality, and living conditions." Methodists wanted to "reach the students critical analysis," Nesman explained, "to think through social and economic problems, to be independent thinkers and reflect on social and economic forces governing their lives, and yet we realized that we were inhabiting a zone of United Fruit."²⁴

On the other hand, many Protestant ministers were completely under the influence of the sugar company. Quaker minister Zenas Martin eventually became a prosperous *colono* for United Fruit. The Reverend Pedro Fernández of Puerto Padre worked as a banker for Chaparra. Methodist minister Rafael Verdecia Hernández, who taught English at the Centro Escolar in Preston, was transferred to the United States, where his three children—Samuel, Marta, and Carlos—completed their high school education. When Verdecia Hernández resumed his ministry in Cuba, Samuel obtained employment in the Agriculture Department of United Fruit and Marta and Carlos were hired by the Nickel Processing Corporation in Nicaro. The nature of this order is poignantly illustrated in the short story "Un pueblo del interior" (1924) by Sergio la Villa. The local Protestant pastor, a simple man, "was himself simply one more possession of the mill," writes Villa. "Cuban by birth, but educated in a college in South Carolina, he liked avocados because they were 'exotic' and was totally unfamiliar with the multiple ingredients of the Cuban stew (*ajiaco criollo*), to which he preferred *corn flakes*. And thus, adapted by education and custom to foreign habits, he lived happily among the American colony that had invaded his native region and that by exploiting it had changed its structure and spirit."²⁵

Cubans were selectively admitted into mill management. The North American presence was a privileged one, possessing and preemptive, controlling and corrupting. The mill hired Cubans as technicians, functionaries, consultants, and attorneys, without whom the mill could not have functioned. The personnel records available indicate that thousands of Cubans were on the payroll in virtually every capacity. According to the office personnel registry for Tuinicú, they were employed as surveyors, physicians, machinists, accountants, inspectors, clerks, electricians, teachers, technicians, engineers, and artisans.²⁶

Cubans who reached the upper levels of administration were typically educated in the United States, mostly men who had made the adaptations necessary to move among North American conventions with confidence and conviction. Mario G. Menocal, administrator of Chaparra, was a graduate of Cornell Uni-

versity. Ernesto Fontes y Sterling, administrator of Delicias, had studied at the New York Military Academy. Ignacio Valdés, the head of the Hormiguero office, attended a North American boarding school. Economist Fernando Berenguer wrote of one Cuban mill employee, "Americanized, full-faced and clean shaven, wearing blue-jean overalls and smoking a large pipe; Cuban by birth and a resident of the United States, where he had taken out American citizenship, of which he boasted. He looked upon other Cubans with disdain and was seen only associating with foreigners." In *Vendaval en los cañaverales*, Lamar Schweyer describes Márquez, the highest paid Cuban in the "Goldenthal Sugar Company," as a "native of Cienfuegos but educated in New York, a drinker of whiskey and a smoker of a pipe and an American citizen." In Luis Felipe Rodríguez's short story "Los subalternos" (1928), Rogelio Cárdenas of the "Yucayo Sugar Company" was the only Cuban permitted to attend the American Club: "He speaks English with its proper guttural and nasal accent. He orders his clothing from Chicago, smokes American cigarettes and is always seen with a copy of the *New York Times* in his pocket. This Cuban played tennis with the misses and properly consorts with his boss Mr. Norton. Rogelio Cárdenas . . . is profoundly convinced that to be Cuban is a misfortune, for he believes, like Mr. Grey, that Cubans are scoundrels and slouchers."²⁷

Opportunities for advancement in the North American mill were often limited, mostly by virtue of nationality. Cubans in administration generally were lower or middle managers. The Cubans in the office of the "Goldenthal Sugar Company" were mostly cashiers, bookkeepers, and secretaries supervised by North Americans. "One could advance from bookkeeper to pay master and from cashier to chief of administration. But no further if one were Cuban."²⁸

Cubans often reached positions high enough to see firsthand the world to which they were denied access. Pedro Menéndez Victorero studied in North American schools and completed a civil engineering correspondence program in the United States. Advancing rapidly in the Central Sugar Corporation, he reached the second highest position in the railroad department. "And it was here," Menéndez Victorero recalled, "that I began to feel the difference between being Cuban and being *yaguqui*, for the latter were well paid, they were housed in comfortable homes, with all expenses paid, and further enjoyed all the privileges that were denied to Cubans, to such a degree that we were never invited to any of the social functions at the administrators' home (*casa de vivienda*) . . . despite the fact that we were very close to the American supervisors and despite the fact that we always presented ourselves correctly dressed and conducted ourselves in the manner that was expected." Félix Peña, the protagonist in "Los subalternos," second in charge in the mill office, "feels the humiliation of his subordination. And for that reason he had resolved to quit the office of the Yucayo mill. . . . But, because it is practical and necessary, he does not want to leave without acquiring experience in the Yucayo mill."²⁹

Salary differentials were also a source of ill will. Cubans who inhabited this world occupied a complex position of ambiguity and ambivalence: privileged by local standards, subordinated by company norms. It would have been difficult to ignore the anomaly of their situation. What they often shared, albeit in different ways, was a sense of alienation, of being Cuban in Cuba, for which they were the object of discrimination.

Many Cubans developed intense hostility toward the North American sugar company, even as they depended on it for their livelihood and well-being, where they confronted daily conditions that set in relief the vast, often unbridgeable distances of being outsiders in their own country. In Pablo Armando Fernández's novel *Los niños se despiden* (1968), Lila revealed an abiding hatred of the Deleite mill: "Because it is not ours. Nothing of this is ours, not the land, not the mill, not the *batey*, not the cane, not even the people who aspire to be like them and who in a certain way are."³⁰

This sense of lack of place, of not belonging, created a peculiar angst for Cubans, one of alienation and estrangement in their own land. The Niipe Bay region, observed Librado Reina in the short story "Resurrección" (1927), had "a concentration of foreigners," where "the one who was in the minority was the Cuban," where "the Cuban does not feel as if he were in his own country and where he participates in the ceremony of a liturgy that erodes national bonds and impoverishes."³¹

The discourse on nationality was often complicated by the understanding that to challenge the terms of the North American presence also implied the necessity to confront the role of Cuban complicity. So deep were the layers of Cuban participation, so structural was the Cuban integration into the North American normative systems, that to challenge the U.S. presence effectively risked evisceration of the social system.

Vast numbers of Cubans found themselves in complicated circumstances. They had joined with North Americans in collaborative relationships, often out of conviction, but also out of convenience, or need, or opportunism. Their participation in this order was vital, and, indeed, there was no other plausible explanation for the resilience of North American hegemony. That so many went along, however, did not necessarily mean that they approved of or were troubled by their circumstances. Many were in positions similar to that of Pedro Menéndez Victorero, who had successfully completed a North American correspondence course in engineering and mechanical drawing but was obliged to work for a U.S. sugar company: "Despite the hatred of the situation of humiliation to which I was condemned and subject, due to the necessities of life, I went to work for an American company, the Caribbean Sugar Company."³²

The mill closed in on itself and reproduced an idealized version of North American moral order: a world as self-contained as it was self-serving, exercising an authority that reached as far as its interests warranted. Its influence

extended into the community through existing power relationships. Company administrators were often longtime residents of the island who over the years had developed extensive networks among local elites. Armando Leyva described North Americans in Banes, many who had been there for fifteen years, who lived well and who "notwithstanding their foreign nationality enjoyed the solid and felicitous friendship with the local families."³³ Such relationships were shaped by binding reciprocities and in the aggregate constituted a complex network made and maintained through patronage and the skillful allocation of resources.

Early on, the sugar company became an influential player in local politics. The mill could tip the balance of local power struggles, facilitate the ascendancy of one contender over another, and provide resources to those political groups favorably disposed to the company's interests. The mill often furnished campaign funds and delivered votes. In Estenger's *El pulpo de oro*, Henry Rawson, manager of the Nebraska mill, selects employee Raimundo Peñafuerte as candidate for a seat in the House of Representatives, "to defend the interests of the Company." The mill proceeds to hire local politicians to obtain the votes, offering to pay \$10 for each vote cast for Peñafuerte. In the partly autobiographical novel *Cubagua: Historia de un pueblo* (1941), Justo González writes of the association between the administrator Mr. King and Patricio, the mayor of Cubagua: "Nothing contributed as much to make [Patricio's] political influence as decisive as the cooperation of the sugar mill. The many people he had helped place in jobs, the farmers who needed loans against their crops, for whom he had acted as intermediary, and all who feared that they might some day have need of his services, represented votes cast for him." No doubt James Gould Cozzens witnessed similar transactions during his residence at Iuinicú. His novel *The Sons of Perdition* (1929) depicts the "United Sugar Company" near the town of "Dos Fuegos," where Mayor Pepe Rijo was stamped by the "great label *United*":

As Alcalde of Dos Fuegos, he felt, unprotesting, like the Company's property. He would never have been alcalde had [General Administrator] Mr. Joel Stellow wanted somebody else for mayor, Chief Man. Without any explanation, the *Administrador General* put a hand under Pepe, [and] lifted him above everyone else. . . . Pepe was made alcalde because he was too simple to offer any obstacle to Mr. Stellow. . . . Pepe knew. The mere mention of Mr. Stellow's name restored to him that sensation of his smallness, his helplessness, of the smallness and helplessness of all of them in the hollow of the Administrator's hand.³⁴

The extent to which local officials were actually working in behalf of mill interests is, of course, largely a matter of conjecture. But that they were involved is indisputable: mayors and governors, town council members and senators, justices of the peace, magistrates, and judges, soldiers and policemen—all, at one time or another, were caught up in the plans and policies of the sugar mill.

Mills engaged in graft and corruption as the normal cost of doing business. The American Sugar Refining Company, for instance, made huge payments to obtain tax relief for the Cunagua and Jaronú mills.³⁵

A powerful network of interlocking interests bound the mill to local officials. Politicians and power brokers frequently appeared on company payrolls. The Macareño mill hired the former director of customs at Antilla, Rafael Ramos, as sugar contractor and agent. Tomás Hernández Avila, former contractor and *mayoral* for Spanish-American Sugar, served on the *ayuntamiento* (town council) of Puerto Padre. Ladislao Guerra y Sánchez was elected mayor of Guantánamo after twenty-five years of employment with the Guantánamo Sugar Company. Chaparra administrator Mario G. Menocal became president of the republic; his successor, Eugenio Molinet, later served as secretary of agriculture under Gerardo Machado. Cuba Cane superintendent of mills Miguel Arango was the Liberal Party nominee for vice president. Fulgencio Batista had worked for the railroad department of United Fruit. President of the House of Representatives Orestes Ferrara and Senator Antonio Sánchez de Bustamante sat on the board of directors of Cuba Cane. Senator Luis Fernández Marcané was senior United Fruit counsel in Cuba. United Fruit's legal affairs was divided into two departments: one at Preston under Angel Navarro, a nephew of Marcané, and the other in Banes under Rafael Díaz Balart, the town mayor.³⁶

Few, indeed, were the municipal and provincial politicians from northeastern Oriente unconnected to United Fruit. Another mayor of Banes, Delfín Campañá, had previously served as an office superintendent. Juan Arnais González had been mayor of Mayarí and inspector of labor accidents for the Department of Agriculture in Guaro before joining United Fruit in Preston. One brother, Mario Arnais Herrera, was a member of the Mayarí city council; another brother, Gabriel Arnais Herrera, was mayor of the Cuban sector of Preston. Oscar Quintín Silva Muñoz worked in the commercial department of United Fruit before assuming the post of secretary of the municipal administration of Banes.

Employment also served to expand and consolidate influence over local authorities through kinship networks. Ramón Sierra García, a Banes power broker, was the second chief of United Fruit's cattle division, a position from which he arranged jobs for no less than sixteen relatives—brothers, sons, nephews, and in-laws—as office clerks, guards, overseers, and cattle hands. Friends and family of local politicians were frequently hired as goodwill gestures and shrewd networking. Representative Santiago García Cañizares of Santa Clara obtained an office position at the Tuinicú mill for a member of his staff. The governor of Santa Clara interceded with Tuinicú for a job for a friend. In González's *Cubagua*, the mayor's son is hired as a company attorney fresh out of law school.³⁷

In return, the mill could reasonably expect a wide variety of concessions and considerations, including favorable court rulings, exemptions from local ordinances, police and military assistance, special tax waivers, port regulation ex-

emptions, and special import licenses. As early as 1915, the Department of Government in Havana received a formal complaint against the *ayuntamiento* of Banes that the municipality was not collecting taxes from United Fruit. "The complaint intimates," reported the *Havana Post*, "that the members of the city council have private reasons for being so considerate of the company's interests." In one Oriente municipality, all government officials, from the mayor to the justice of the peace, owned *colonias* that sold cane to the local North American mill. Charges by workers and small landowners of mill wrongdoing were routinely dismissed. "The administrator of the mill is always right in the eyes of the authorities," commented an observer.³⁸

The sugar company was emblematic of almost everything that was wrong in Cuba's relationship with the United States: the powerlessness, the degree to which the mill constituted a world unto itself in which Cubans had no rights except those conceded by the company and to which existed neither remedy nor redress. "Cuba for the American mill owner," says the peasant protagonist in Raimundo Cabrera's novel *Sombras eternas* (1919), "is what it was for the old *peninsular*: a colony, a land for exploitation, and the Cuban a serf."³⁹

Of course, the mill could not function unassisted. A vast, complex network of overlapping and mutually reinforcing interests involved local politicians and judges, army officers and police officials, religious leaders and community authorities in the company's interests. The mill reigned over a domain of immense proportions, an entity responsive only to the logic of the market and accountable only to the authority of shareholders. "The sugar mills are independent states within the Cuban State," concluded Carlos Forment. "It appears inconceivable to me," affirmed José Comallonga of the National Association of the Sugar Industry, "that one of those corporations possesses 165,800 acres cultivated like oceans of cane, without there being in so vast a territory a single *bohío*, not one Cuban, without a single native *colono*, and hardly any Cuban employees; with its own sub-port, buying everything directly; its own customs collector, with its own police force. In sum: everything, everything, everything American. Is this not a State? Is this not a foreign State on Cuba soil, connected to Cuba only physically?"⁴⁰

The image of the North American sugar company was thus fixed in the Cuban imagination. Years later Marcial Ponce reminisced about Preston: "The laws of the country did not apply there. It had its own laws and one had better be very careful about obeying them." "The law?" asks the protagonist in Lamar Schweyer's *Vendaval en los cañaverales*. "There is no law here except the Company," proclaims Nida in Cozzens's *Son of Perdition*. "In the sugar mills only the will of the representative of the company rules." The mill, explains the narrator, "has managed to convert itself into a foreign fiefdom in the heart of the island." In effect, "They can do whatever they want to the Cuban on his own land." Indeed, seigniorial analogies were commonly drawn to describe the world of the

sugar mill. Henry Rawson of the Nebraska mill in Estenger's *El pulpo de oro* is said to "live like a king in the sugar zone." Virginia Schofield, a former resident of a United Fruit enclave, made a similar comparison: "United Fruit Company officials lived like nobility and kings." Methodist minister Edgar Nesman agreed: "They ruled as if they dominated a kingdom. Authoritarian, totalitarian, every-one and everything under their control. A colonial aristocracy. And all administered out of Boston."⁴¹

The image of the mill outside and above the law assumed a powerful resonance in the narrative on nationality. Because the North American presence was so visible, and so visibly privileged, it aroused resentment and revulsion. The reach of the sugar company extended over tens of thousands of Cubans, who were subject to its authority without recourse. Such a presence challenged the very concept of nation: huge areas of the island beyond the reach of national authority. This reality evoked the idea of a *Cuba irredenta*, of expanses of national territory needing to be returned to Cuban sovereignty. Sergio la Villa characterized the North American mill as "a type of American ship anchored on land, with Cuban servants and crew, but with an American officialdom." Walfredo Rodríguez Blanca concurred: "Effectively, we have on this island a Republic and various private 'territories' belonging to North Americans."⁴²

THE PRESENCE OF THE NAVAL STATION

The establishment of the U.S. naval station on Guantánamo Bay in 1903 created a North American enclave of another type, one that also transformed daily life for the surrounding communities. The impact was direct and dramatic and most keenly experienced in the cities along the southeastern coast, including Santa Cruz del Sur, Manzanillo, and Santiago de Cuba. But it was in Caimanera, on the western side of Guantánamo Bay, and in the city of Guantánamo, north of the base, that the naval station dominated Cuban life. Caimanera and Guantánamo acquired their definitive form through their principal economic activity: servicing the naval station. The regional economy developed specifically around the needs of U.S. service personnel, which meant, too, that the ties between local communities and the naval station were structural and reciprocal. The base provided the major source of revenue on which the livelihood and well-being of thousands of households depended. The arrival of the fleet announced boom times. During the 1920s the city of Guantánamo (pop. 15,000) was visited annually by an estimated 25,000 servicemen, whose business, one observer affirmed, "contributed mightily to the trade of this city." A small café operator reported that earnings increased from \$200 daily with ordinary base personnel to \$1,000 a day when the fleet dropped anchor.⁴³

Merchants prepared orders and acquired stock timed with the arrival of the sailors and marines. In 1927 Guantánamo suffered a severe blow when the fleet commander confined servicemen to the naval station. "Business in Guantá-

namo City is stagnant . . ." noted the U.S. consul in Santiago de Cuba, "many firms being particularly bad off because they stocked up in anticipation of the Fleet's visit . . . and were left with goods unsold." When the following year the fleet wintered in Puerto Rico, the effect on Guantánamo and Caimanera was devastating. "Bills in Caimanera involving considerable sums," related an observer in 1928, "are usually paid 'when the fleet comes in,' and merchants now find themselves heavily stocked. Financial ruin faces smaller merchants. Rooming houses will suffer, farmers in the country will be unable to dispose of produce and cigar dealers are hurt. Hurt too are car owners and bootleggers."⁴⁴

Much of the commerce of Guantánamo depended on the naval station. Local merchants and retailers regularly supplied fresh fruits and vegetables to the base commissary. "Base personnel," reported one local observer, "constitute one of the most permanent and plentiful sources of livelihood of the city of Guantánamo." When the town learned that the *Missouri* was arriving, Pedro Suárez recalled, "all the businessmen were overjoyed. At one time the *Missouri* represented the presence of five thousand Marines in town who generated all the earnings for the length of three or four months." Most retail shops stocked North American products. Local establishments bore distinctly U.S. names, including the Washington Hotel, the Kentucky House, and the Roosevelt Hotel. So did bars, nightclubs, and cafés: the Gold and Silver Bar, Pan-American Club, Roof Garden Bar, Arizona Club. The city of Guantánamo "is becoming a Monte Carlo," *La Lucha* declared as early as 1905.⁴⁵

The naval station became an integral part of daily life in Guantánamo. Hundreds of dependents of base personnel established residence in the city, and North American ways took a firm hold. Guantánamo was "the most Americanized city in the whole of Cuba," proclaimed the *Times of Havana* in 1958:

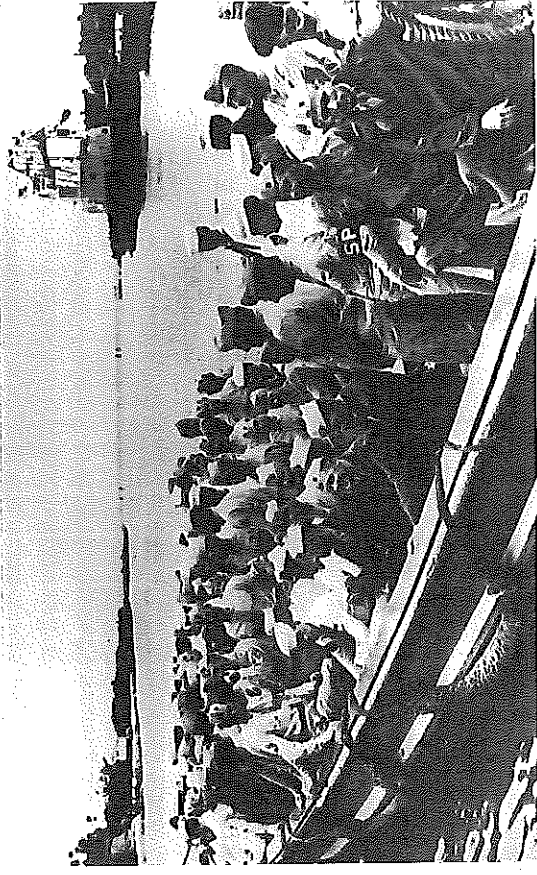
The money that goes daily into the vaults of the several local banks is more than half Uncle Sam's currency, left here by personnel on their frequent visits for entertainment or shopping from the sprawling U.S. Naval Base. . . . Most shopkeepers and tradesmen—and even street urchins and professional beggars—can hold their own in conversation with visiting gobs and marines who flock into town by the hundreds and thousands each week-end. Unlike any other Cuban city with a mere seventy thousand population, Guantánamo provides all sorts of entertainment, from side street honky tonks to modern night clubs and a gambling casino. In all of them one is more likely to hear English spoken than the native Spanish.⁴⁶

The impact of the base on Caimanera was especially pronounced. Among the 7,000 Cuban residents in Caimanera there lived an assortment of North American social types: unsavory individuals such as hustlers, gamblers, pimps, and bootleggers as well as a community of retired naval personnel who remained to operate bars and cafés. Naval contractor George Gillings and retired chief petty

officer Jim Beauzay ran a local hotel. During Prohibition ex-naval personnel in Caimanera conducted a flourishing bootlegging trade with the naval station, especially the service personnel of the fleets. An average 2,000 to 3,000 servicemen visited Caimanera weekly. Caimanera could not but yield to the logic of its location, as a small, desultory fishing village of several hundred households was transformed to serve the needs of the naval personnel—"an extension of American territory," pronounced *Bohemia* in 1938. Gambling houses and casinos multiplied; bars and brothels proliferated. "Caimanera is the Barbary Coast of Cuba," wrote George Wally, "where American sailors on pass from only across the bay . . . stay overnight to make whoopee in sailor fashion."⁴⁷

But mostly Caimanera was squalor, a mixture of the seamy with the sordid, a place of rural wretchedness and misery. It lacked hospitals and schools. It was often without adequate water supplies and was almost always a place of questionable sanitary conditions. On more than one occasion naval authorities declared the village off-limits due to health concerns. Caimanera received the dubious distinction of being identified in Ripley's *Believe It or Not* as one of the filthiest settlements in the world. Few who visited the place disagreed. "The entire town of Caimanera beggars description as to its moral and sanitary defects," asserted U.S. consul H. M. Wolcott in 1917. "The streets are mud holes during the rainy season and are entirely without public light service. Close by the docks and scattered among the few places of legitimate businesses are saloons and houses of prostitution of the most degraded type. There is no place of amusement or recreation here that is not an immoral influence." Thirty-five years later Methodist minister Ira Sherman arrived at substantially the same conclusion: "Caimanera is literally the most God-forsaken town I've ever seen."⁴⁸

The economy of Caimanera relied largely on its cafés, cabarets, and casinos, its bars and brothels. More than eight hundred women worked as prostitutes in nearly fifty brothels. Most brothels were named after different states in the union—among them, "Maryland," "New York," and "Florida." More than thirty bars catered exclusively to U.S. servicemen. One district of the town, known locally as "Brooklyn," was reserved for officers and petty officers. "No mere gorb or marine may set foot in . . . [the] aristocratic dance hall," commented an observer. "One has to be 'brass bound,' as they say in the navy . . . for the enlisted man gets 'his' on the other side." Ira Sherman walked the streets of Caimanera one night in March 1952 and counted no less than three hundred sailors in the houses of prostitution. "It really is sickening," he wrote at the time, "and certainly such as to make one rather ashamed to be an American in this community." Years later Sherman remembered it vividly: "Caimanera as a whole depended to a preponderant degree on the patronage of the U.S. navy people in the bars and houses of prostitution which gave the casual visitor to the town the impression that there was virtually nothing else there at all. It seemed that there was very little employment of any kind in the town itself not directly related to



U.S. servicemen from the Guantánamo Naval Station arriving at Caimanera on shore leave, ca. 1940s. (Courtesy of the photographic archives, *Bohemia*, Havana)

those bars and houses, although I suppose there may have been a small grocery or two."⁴⁹

North American servicemen became something of a permanent fixture. Often thousands of sailors and marines, on liberty after months at sea, were determined to let loose and plunge into dissipation, often with predictable results: barroom brawls, street fights, and conflicts with local police. Former marine James Manning recorded his experiences at the naval station during the late 1940s in fictional form:

Damn kids. Why don't they keep them on their cursed ships? These Latin ports, these unobtrusive people are not prepared for the hordes of sailors and marines pulling liberty in their front yards. Young men at their sexual pinacles, pulled out of the States for the intrigues of foreign ports with their infatuated imaginations. Having their first excursions from behind the barriers of moral restrictions drawn by parents and home towns, then these Caribbean ports, with their basic potentials to please the appetites of these soaring Phaethons with gnawing insides, equal to moral chaos and civil lethargy.⁵⁰

The economic impact of the base affected virtually all Cuban households. The receipts generated by servicemen on leave made a huge contribution to the local economy. By the early 1950s, moreover, the U.S. Navy had developed into one of the largest local employers. About two thousand residents of the city of Guantánamo worked on the base as carpenters, mechanics, electricians, plumb-

ers, painters, welders, truck drivers, gardeners, seamstresses, cooks, and maids. The base generated a payroll of almost \$4 million annually.

The proximity of the naval station to Caimanera and Guantánamo set in sharp relief the disparities between Cuban communities and the North American zone. This was a world to which thousands of Cuban workers gained access daily as they traveled back and forth between two starkly different environments. The naval station was equipped with a hospital, swimming pools, a 27-hole golf course, tennis courts, bowling alleys, basketball courts, and an outdoor motion picture theater—the whole of which resembled a resort. The base was an “extension of American territory,” observed one Cuban journalist, “where the American life-style prevails, with all the comfort, conveniences, the sanitary precautions, ventilation, discipline, and order required in such a location. . . . Hundreds of homes are in perfect geometric alignment, each one with ample gardens decorated profusely with roses and flowers, with very clean streets, illuminated at night with a profusion of lights. The Cuban can visit that zone only after having been declared healthy and having his baggage checked, almost as if he were arriving to another country of scrupulous sanitary regulations.” On the other hand: “Near the naval station the city of Guantánamo vegetates, fetid and dirty, the other side of the coin: dressed in rags. The town gives the impression of disaster, depression, and squalor. . . . It is because of the decadence of spirit and the environment of miasma that so much filth can coexist with so much garbage.”⁵¹

The abject moral and material plight of Caimanera belied the Cuban claim to membership among the modern nations of the world. It was not that similar conditions did not exist elsewhere in the republic. They did, of course, and in some locations were worse. What made Caimanera different was that it was both visible and visited by North Americans, thus serving as the basis on which the North would judge Cuba. “Does it not occur to our leaders,” Herminio Portell Vilá asked plaintively in 1954, “that the naval station serves as a window through which hundreds of thousands of North Americans have seen a Cuban community mired in backwardness, without hygiene, and in misery? Caimanera has more than 10,000 residents who live in shocking conditions of poverty and backwardness, virtually at the doorsteps of a North American community on Cuban soil in which hygiene, comfort, and civilization are the characteristics of the towns of the United States.”⁵²

THE EVANGELICAL MISSION

North Americans established their presence throughout Cuba, from east to west, in all provinces, in the cities and in the countryside. They arrived as individuals, as families, often as entire communities; as investors, industrialists, and entrepreneurs; as landowners and miners; as merchants and manufacturers; sometimes as small companies and often as large corporations. They arrived as

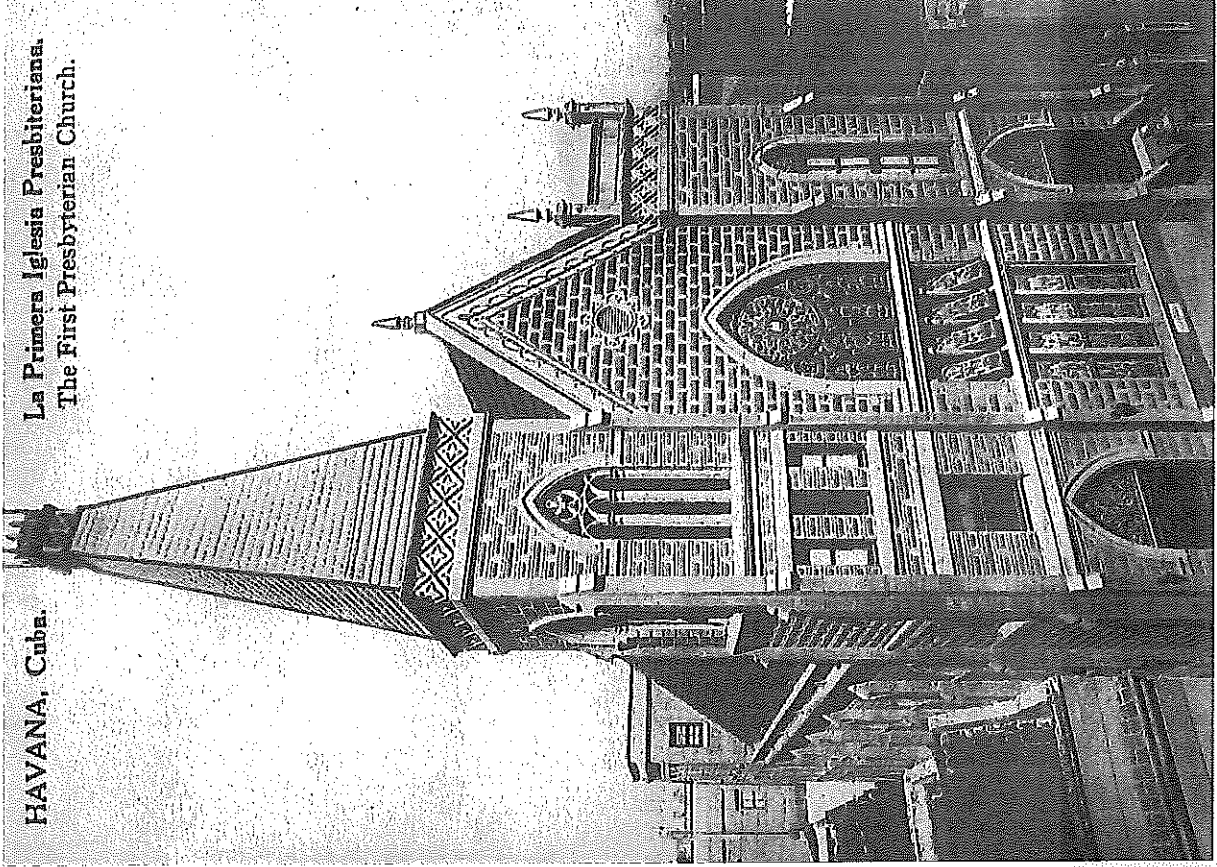
distributors of wares and dispensers of ways in their person, self-possessed and single-minded in their purpose. Most of all, they arrived with an unshakable confidence that the future belonged to them. Few Cubans could see any reason to doubt their certainty.

The North American presence assumed many forms, not everywhere the same, of course, and not always with the same effect. But the pattern of the process was the same. The presence of North Americans always seemed to change things. They seemed capable of rearranging the material elements and moral imperatives of everyday life around their own needs, to which everyone else was subsequently obliged to negotiate accommodations as a means of well-being and livelihood.

What gave North American cultural forms their particular resonance and, indeed, their enduring resilience was that they took hold locally, precisely because they seemed relevant to daily life as experienced in even the most remote communities. Protestant missionaries were particularly successful in establishing a local presence. Churches and schools appeared almost everywhere; most towns and villages had at least one active preaching station. “Every considerable village in Cuba,” an observer commented as early as 1901, “had at least one Protestant minister . . . with, generally, two or three women auxiliaries.” Missionaries were dedicated, determined, and driven. They suffered adversity and privation, often toiled under wretched circumstances, yet persisted. Methodist missionary David Carter wrote poignantly of his experiences:

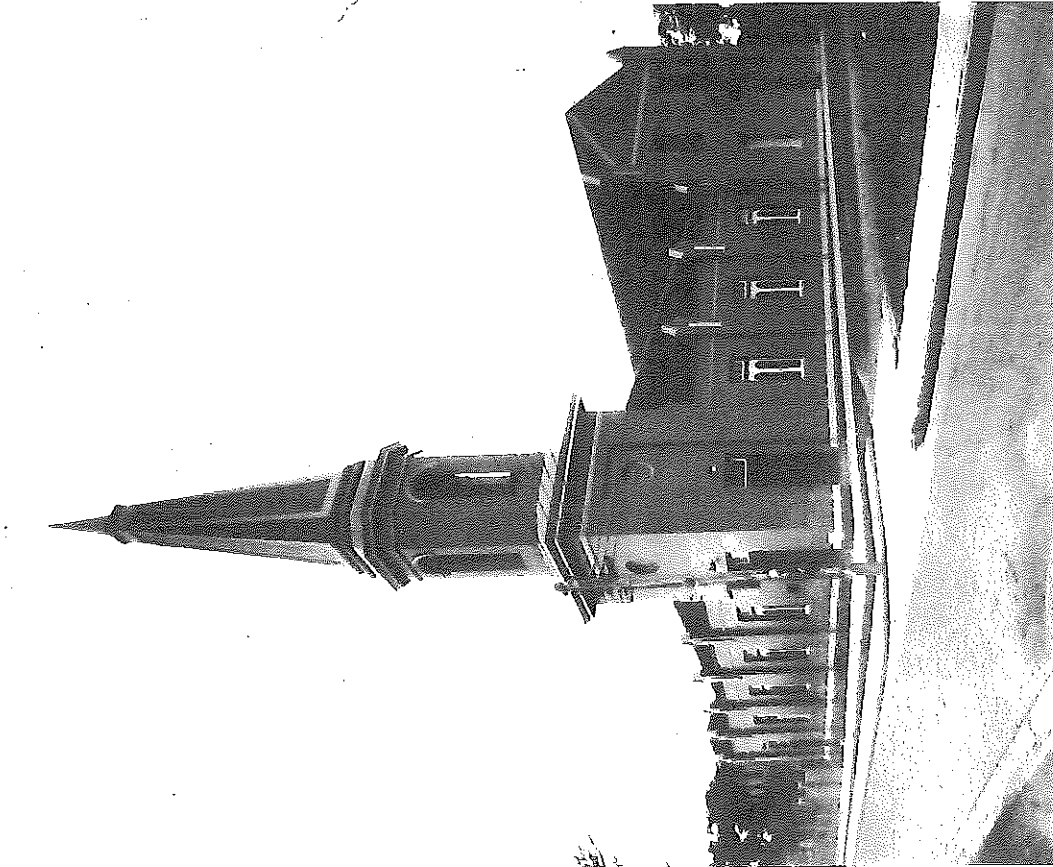
I have worked to the limit of my strength. I have endured hardships not a few, I have traveled thousands of miles in second-class Cuban cars. I have slept in dirty, vermin-infested beds. I have eaten unwholesome and unclean food in wretched little Cuban fondas. I have spent weary hours toiling through the deep mud of Cuban roads on old poor beasts scarcely able to carry me—the best that could be hired—reaching my destination so stiff and sore I could scarcely dismount and my hands and face blistered by the sun. I have threaded my way through dense forests scratched by briars and thorns and covered with mud. I have forded swollen streams so deep and dangerous that the muddy waters came up midway the saddle skirts.⁵³

Missionaries arrived at the onset of the military occupation in 1898, initially in scattered numbers and subsequently in successive waves; they represented the principal Protestant denominations in the United States. They staked out spheres of influence in all provinces and in almost all *municipios*. Methodists began their work in Havana, then extended their activities into Matanzas, Cárdenas, Cienfuegos, Manzanillo, and Santiago de Cuba. Presbyterians located in Havana, Artemisa, Cárdenas, Bejucal, Caibarién, Camajuani, Remedios, San José de los Ramos, and Placetas. Episcopalians proclaimed the island a missionary diocese, with a resident bishop in Havana and mission stations in Matanzas,



HAVANA, Cuba.
La Primera Iglesia Presbiteriana.
The First Presbyterian Church.

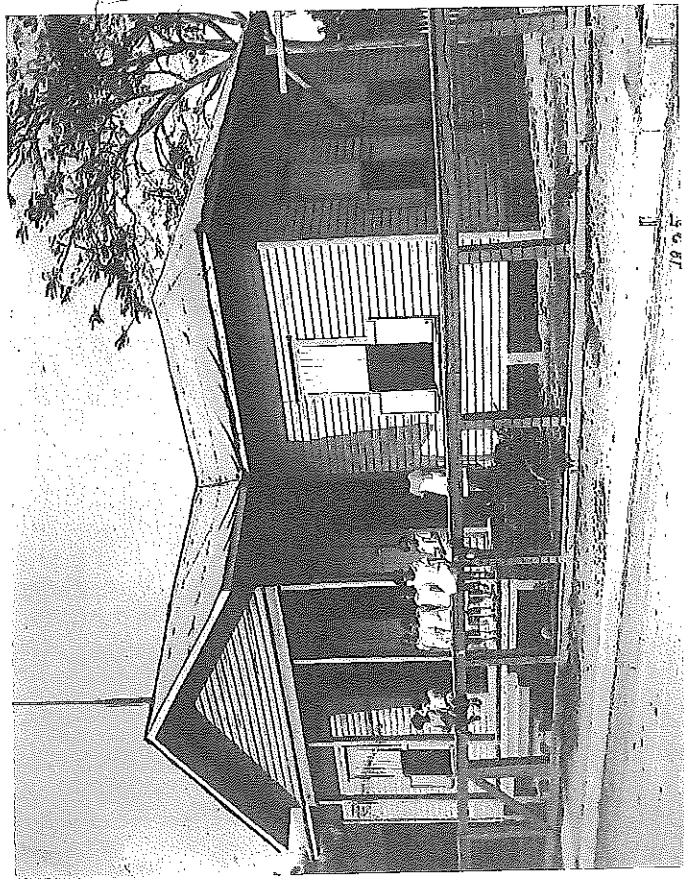
A Presbyterian church in Havana, n.d. (Courtesy of the Friends Historical Collection, Guilford College, Guilford, N.C.)



HAVANA, Cuba.
A Baptist church in Cabaiguán, n.d.
(Courtesy of the Biblioteca Nacional José Martí, Havana)

Bolondrón, Unión de Reyes, Isle of Pines, and La Gloria. Baptists fanned out into all six provinces. Congregationalists moved into Havana, Guanajay, San Antonio de los Baños, Guanabacoa, and Matanzas. Disciples of Christ established themselves in Havana and Matanzas. Quakers spread along the northern coast of Oriente into Puerto Padre, Holguín, Gibara, and Banes. Pentecostals set up missions in Havana and Cárdenas.

In fact, so many denominations arrived in Cuba at one time that evangelical competition quickly got out of hand. In 1902 an interdenominational conference convened in Cienfuegos to impose order on these missionary projects.



A Quaker schoolhouse in Banes, 1925. (Courtesy of the Friends Historical Collection, Guilford College, Guilford, N.C.)

The resulting comity plan established zones of influence for the larger denominations: Northern Baptists were allotted Oriente and Camagüey, while Southern Baptists received Las Villas, Matanzas, Havana, and Pinar del Río. Quakers and Methodists divided eastern Cuba between them. Presbyterians and Congregationalists settled in the western provinces. Episcopalians operated in Havana, Matanzas, and Santiago de Cuba.

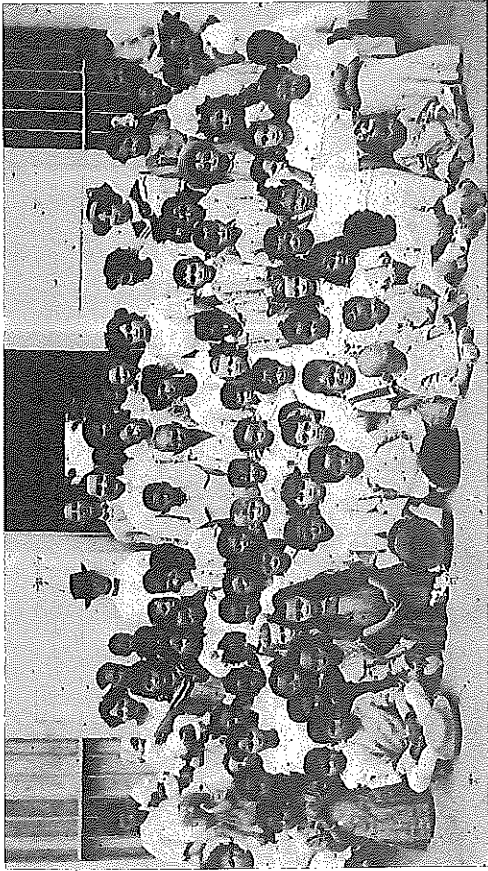
Early evangelical efforts centered on humanitarian projects, specifically philanthropic work and social programs. Missionaries entered an environment of dire need, dispensing goods and services where little of either were readily available. They sponsored relief work and organized extensive programs to aid victims of the war. They distributed tools and supplies, seeds, and agricultural equipment to farmers. Methodists delivered food supplies to reconcentration camp victims in Cienfuegos and opened the Industrial Asylum for orphans in Cárdenas. Presbyterians founded an orphanage in Cárdenas. Episcopalians organized shelters in Havana, Guantánamo, Matanzas, and Bolondrón to care for orphans and dispense food supplies to reconcentrados. Virtually all of the principal denominations dispatched physicians and nurses and established clinics and dispensaries where medical services were provided at little or no cost.

Protestants also organized schools. Indeed, perhaps no single undertaking so

fully engaged the material resources and moral resolve of the Evangelicals as education. They offered private education at modest cost and often at no cost at all. At the time, the public school system operated in varying degrees of disarray and disrepute; public schools were understaffed and underfunded, if they existed at all. Missionary schools thus met real and immediate needs. Moving into all municipalities of the island, they provided instruction from kindergarten through high school, vocational and technical training—in agriculture, industry, and mechanical trades—and business schools and four-year colleges. Their projects included schooling for boys and girls of all ages, adult education, programs for the handicapped (the blind and deaf), boarding schools for children of the well-to-do, and asylums for orphans.⁵⁴ Methodists established a network of *colegios* for girls in Matanzas (Irene Tolland College), Marianao (Buena Vista), and Cienfuegos (Eliza Bowman), as well as schools in Camagüey (Pinson), Havana (Candler), Santiago de Cuba (Wesley), and Guaro (Agricursal and Industrial School), and elementary schools in Havana, Santa Clara, Vedado, Camagüey, and Santiago de Cuba. Presbyterian Robert L. Wharton founded La Progresiva in Cárdenas, modeled on the U.S. academic curriculum. Other Presbyterian schools opened in Havana, Caibaguán, Caibarién, Güines, Nuevo Paz, and Sancti-Spiritus. Episcopalians launched the Cathedral School (Havana), the Brooks Home and School and the Sarah Ashurst Episcopal High School (Guantánamo), La Trinidad (Morón), and the Industrial School (Matanzas). In 1905 the Church of Christ opened McClean College (Havana) and El Discipulo College (Matanzas). Southern Baptists founded the Cuban-American College (Havana), the Woman's Training School (Santa Clara), high schools in Colón and Batabanó, and elementary schools in Mariel, Colón, Cruces, Trinidad, Cárdenas, Sancti-Spiritus, and Consolación del Sur. Northern Baptists organized the Colegio Internacional (El Cristo) for boys and girls and elementary schools at Manzanillo, Baracoa, and Guantánamo. The Adventists founded the Antilles High School in Santa Clara. Quakers established Los Amigos school in Holguín and a network of elementary schools and *colegios* in Banes, Antilla, Gibara, and Puerto Padre.

Missionary educators often replicated the race-driven curricula strategies common in the United States. The large number of blacks in Limonar shaped the curriculum of the local Episcopalian school. "Because of the prevalence of blacks in this locality," Bishop Albion Knight explained in 1907, "I have selected this point as the place to locate an industrial school for the negroes modelled on the plan of Hampton, Tuskegee, and Lawrenceville."⁵⁵

Missionaries consciously assumed the role of agents of civilization and progress, dedicated to moral regeneration and the introduction of new habits of sobriety, thrift, industry, and discipline. "For nearly 400 years Cuba was isolated and had no actual contact with progressive ideas or ideals," Bishop Knight affirmed in 1916. The encounter was rendered as a contest between "two differ-



A Quaker Sunday school class, Gibara, 1910. (Courtesy of the Friends Historical Collection, Guilford College, Guilford, N.C.)

ing ideas of civilization": the conception of civilization "that belonged to the period of the explorers in the time of Columbus" and the idea of "civilization which prevails today in the most enlightened countries in the world." One missionary wrote of the "by-products of the Gospel in Cuba," chief among which was "the creation of a purer civic atmosphere." This new environment called for "self-control, civic integrity, truthfulness and honesty in business, . . . desire for purer politics, [and] opposition to Cuban vices of sensuality and gambling." The relationship between education and moral uplift was palpable. "The ignorance of the people on all lines is appalling," declared Quaker May Mather Jones from Gibara in 1901, "and the standard of morals for this and other reasons is very low." The Reverend E. P. Herrick wrote eloquently about preparing the "children of the Antilles" for "the duties and responsibilities of citizenship." Missionary Howard Grose described Cubans as "ambitionless and ignorant and improvident," with "indifference to pursuits that demand patient investigation, hard intellectual effort, or scientific accuracy," whose condition had "kept [their] mind free from any anxiety as to making provision for the future." Grose recounted a conversation with a local farmer who, when asked why he did not cultivate more of his land, replied: "What is the use? When I need money I pick off some bananas and sell them. I get for them twenty or twenty-five dollars, which lasts me a long time. When I need more money I pick more bananas." Concluded Grose: "What a distance they must be lifted, if they are to reach a real Christian civilization!"⁵⁶

The immediate impact, and indeed the larger significance, of the evangelical mission was more than a change of religious faith. "Conversion" also implied a

change of behavior and new attitudes toward life and living. Both were mutually reinforcing. The power of Protestantism lay in the fact that it was spiritual as well as practical, theological as well as temporal, otherworldly as well as worldly. The transition from colony to republic, accompanied as it was by the expansion of U.S. market forms, placed missionaries in an important transitional role. They provided still one more way that the normative foundations of the postcolonial reality were rearranged around North American hierarchies. The goods and methods they introduced anticipated the messages and meanings they proclaimed, and vice versa. Missionaries arrived bearing representations of the North; as cultural artifacts and consumption preferences, they served as advocates of a moral economy that celebrated commodity and commerce and in the process advanced the idea that individual mobility and material well-being were within everyone's reach. Missionaries self-consciously imagined themselves as harbingers of progress and modernity, a state of mind that had less to do with religious affiliation than with national identity. May Mather Jones was eloquent about the conditions in Gibara, "the place where . . . Columbus, on his first voyage, landed." She continued:

But, alas! How little advancement has been made! The people are almost a hundred years behind the times. The Cuban farmer brings his produce to market in a large double basket thrown over the back of his horse something after the manner of old fashioned saddlebags. . . . The coming of the Americans and the introduction of American ideas has caused a ridiculous blending of the ancient and modern, for instance, side by side with the above we have an electric light plant and a telegraph office. . . . But in spite of his slow, plodding life, the average Cuban is anxious to learn and this makes the outlook hopeful, though his mind is yet as uncultivated as the hills and plains where he makes his home.

Northern Baptists set out explicitly "to mold the [Cuban] character." This endeavor presumably involved the elimination of differences whereby Cubans were to be assimilated into a new moral order in which all would be judged by a single standard. "The missionary work represented by Protestant missions is the best hope for the future of Cuba," affirmed Howard Grose. "There must be a deal of uplifting, of change, of improvement. The moral standards must be raised, and new ideals must be introduced. The Cuban people have generations of bad training and no training to outgrow, new habits to form, new customs to adopt, before they can reach the condition of civilization which they ought to have."⁵⁷

Much of evangelical education drew on the belief that discipline and self-possession would produce uplift and upward mobility. Missionaries served as conduits of market culture, offering the promise of participation as the reward for self-restraint, central to which was education: a tangible opportunity for self-

improvement. This was the central premise of educational strategies and the proof of the promise. The prospects for evangelical success turned on the capacity of this experience not only to make the new postcolonial reality comprehensible but also to make it negotiable and accessible.

Educational programs represented one of the more important ways that North American ways spread across Cuba. Schools provided moral authority for individual action and beliefs and promised empowerment at a time when change and transition were the most salient facets of the postcolonial environment. Education offered a means of inclusion in the new order, a way to obtain preparation and the necessary skills to compete.

The sources of the missionary appeal were many and mixed; indeed, the appeal itself was different to different people at different times. The fact that many children attended Protestant schools was itself both product and portent of the new order and suggests the degree to which Evangelicalism was perceived to offer economic security and social mobility. Indeed, for vast numbers, Protestant schools offered the most readily available means to obtain preparation to negotiate ordinary encounters with the new order. This became one more way to make sense of change and get through the period of transition. Moreover, Protestant education figured prominently in Cuban survival strategies: it provided a way to cope with change and get through the period of transition. Missionaries could endeavor to remake the everyday world of Cuban communities and in the process integrate individuals into the larger value system around which postcolonial Cuba reorganized. James Gould Cozzens inhabited that world briefly as a tutor on the Tuinicú sugar estate, an experience that later found narrative form in *Cock Pit*: "Those Protestant ministers whose duties were never done, whose manifold activities and good works kept their churches in a turmoil of classes, benefits and uplifting programs all the week through, and whose obligations extended to the last details of the individual lives of their flock."⁵⁸

But this framework also provided a standard by which to measure the efficacy of capitalist structures on their own terms. The promise of the paradigm could be judged within the moral and material standards suggested by the evangelical project. That the evangelical church became so involved in everyday life would have important implications over the long run. Perhaps without realizing it, and certainly without meaning to, the very missionary project that integrated Cubans into the new market culture also enabled them to envision alternative possibilities and shape expectations derived from the ethic of hard work and good deeds. In its most successful form, it could create the incentive to participate—to motivate the farmer to grow more bananas, for example. But expectations unmet could serve as a powerful source of mobilization. The failure of market mechanisms to accommodate Cuban needs fully and fairly could generate discontent and dissent and eventually discredit the very structures they were designed to celebrate.

Interests sometimes converged, but almost as often they clashed, frequently at the same time, always as an element central to the Cuban-North American encounter. Much of the U.S. purpose was designed to incorporate Cubans into the new order, to help Cubans define themselves and their needs to facilitate their integration into the structures of North American material culture. Certainly the evangelical church shaped aspirations, but it also fostered needs that, in the end, there was no way of meeting. Without fully recognizing the inherent limitations of dependent capitalist structures of an export economy to accommodate Cuban interests, however, they set in motion the forces that would contribute to discrediting market relationships. Cubans acquiesced to this agenda largely in the belief that it promised personal fulfillment and material well-being. But it is unclear whether North Americans gave much thought to the implications of their success.

The Protestant mission was a complex undertaking. It was, to be sure, pre-eminently concerned with the spiritual, with salvation and the hereafter. But it also understood the need to address temporal matters of livelihood and the material conditions of the here and now. At a deeper level, and only partially distinct from spiritual salvation, missionaries aspired to nothing less than reordering the value system of everyday life: to engage Cubans in dialogue whose terms they sought to control and whose structure transmitted the assumptions of North American moral hierarchies. "To us, who study the Cuban situation from a moral standpoint," explained the Reverend J. Milton Greene, "it seems that the radical need of this people is the introduction of a new religious system under which a remedy can be found for intellectual stagnation and which will substitute for merely external rites and ceremonies . . . of the heart, the discipline of character and the regulation of daily life." The Protestant promise arrived embedded in the concept of moral uplift, insinuated in the idiom of the market as a means of material well-being. The formulation was central to the credibility of the evangelical purpose and the long-term success of the church. "It is difficult to see," observed J. Merle Davis in 1942, "how a virile church can ever arise in an economic order that gives employment for less than half of the year."⁵⁹

North American missionaries were fundamentally engaged in a project of transformation, the central premise of which was to confront Cubans with their defects of character and the deficiencies of their condition and offer a remedy to both through redemption as an act of rearranging the normative hierarchies of everyday life. Howard Grose wrote of the evangelical success in "changing lives," introducing new "moral standards" by which Cuba would acquire "a new conscience, a new consciousness, a new creed." Reverend Greene frowned on prevailing child-rearing practices, because "the children grow up lawless, willful and selfish, without the first element of self-control in their character." Cubans revealed a "lack of intellectual initiative, . . . the absence of industrial conscience, of personal integrity, of domestic purity, of mutual confidence, and of social

morality." Quaker Benjamin Trueblood wrote of Cubans "kept in ignorance" who "pass their time lounging, sleeping, . . . smoking, gambling at cards, and in various pleasures, often of the lowest animal kind." Yet he believed that the island had a promising future if "the right influences" were brought to bear. Baptist Henry Morehouse agreed. Cubans had to be taught "how to behave themselves," he insisted, and, using the analogy of the "blasting of rock from the quarry," he added: "They must be hammered and shaped for their respective places and assembled and arranged for service according to the architect's design." Richard Milk of the Agricultural and Industrial School wrote explicitly of "the changed life [as] the basis for all religious and moral progress." The Reverend David White argued that the evangelical church "must not think solely of converting a man to a new outlook on life, but must create new possibilities of living for him." The church was enjoined to "put before these people new creative tasks" and "reach out beyond Sunday giving each day both content and meaning." Methodist Edgar Nesman introduced a 4-H Club to provide "suitable character building experiences." Students were expected to undertake projects for which they were "personally responsible." Activities expanded in other directions: "The club is now in the process of learning how to hold a democratic meeting," Nesman wrote in 1954. "It is exciting to watch the progress of youngsters brought up in an authoritarian culture as they learn to work together, each holding some responsibility for the success of the group."⁶⁰

In the end, missionaries were less successful in converting Cubans into pious Protestants than in disseminating cultural forms of the North American market system. It was not only that missionaries sought to bring Cubans to a new faith. They were also determined to change the way Cubans lived. They sought to transform the nature of the Cuban condition by reordering the material circumstances and redefining the moral framework of daily life. Quakers and Methodists organized industrial programs to promote crafts and cottage industries to make Cubans "independent of the one-crop system." Emphasis was given to production and marketing: "to teach students in school and people in their homes to make things that can be sold." The Methodist Agricultural and Industrial School sought to promote "changes in understanding, attitudes, and skills." Its major objective was to prepare youth "for adequate social and spiritual adjustments to meet the complex problems of modern life" and "for democracy by trying to practice democracy at all levels within the school structure." The Colegio Presbiteriano in Guines adopted a curriculum designed to neutralize the "marked individualism of the Cuban temperament" by promoting a "cooperative spirit" among the children. Students were organized in cooperative societies to manage departments, from which they derived income and experience. "What purpose is there in religion if it doesn't change the lives of people?" asked the Reverend Carroll English in 1955. "If it changes people, it changes culture."⁶¹

The evangelical mission envisaged spiritual rebirth as the source of material well-being and specifically to improve the living standards of all Cubans, especially among the urban working classes and rural poor. Families of modest social origins were among the most receptive to the evangelical message. In *Cubagua*, Justo González—himself a Methodist minister—set his memories in a fictional town where "all the converts were of humble condition." This depiction was corroborated by the Reverend Arthur Gray, who described Cuban congregations as belonging "to what is called the 'working class.'" Students at the Agricultural and Industrial School were "very largely young people of impoverished family circumstances." Merle Davis estimated that workers, farmers, and the unemployed constituted 30 percent of church membership, followed by housewives (29 percent) and students (23 percent): "a constituency . . . drawn almost entirely from the lower middle class, the very poor, and the humblest ranks of society."⁶²

Protestant ministers were directly concerned with the material condition of their congregations, without which the spiritual message could not reasonably be expected to possess relevance or resonance. This certainly was conceived as a subtext of the evangelical message—a strategy, in a word. But sufficient evidence exists to suggest that it was received as the dominant text, in which case it was not dissimilar to subversive narrative. Under certain conditions, evangelists could direct Cubans to specific forms of self-awareness of their condition and almost always around North American notions of well-being and good living. The power and, indeed, the promise of the evangelical project were related directly to the degree to which Protestants summoned a vision of moral uplift and material upswing. North American Protestants invited Cubans to join a righteous community based on spiritual tranquility and material well-being, on justice and equality. The emphasis was on free will, on ideals of civil liberties and civic virtues, on natural rights and individual responsibility.

This was very seductive stuff and could not but have been received with anything less than expectation, although it was not always clear how these formulations would improve the Cuban condition. Baptist minister M. N. McCall alluded to abject conditions in the countryside, to the "forgotten man of Cuba," whose "government has talked about improving his living conditions but has done almost nothing." McCall pledged to "take a message of hope and salvation which changes and lifts all life out of such conditions." Bishop Albion Knight drew the moral explicitly along class lines. "The native people who are being reached," he acknowledged, "belong usually to what is ordinarily known as the lower class of people." More to the point: "The lower class realizes that there has been something wrong in the order of things that such conditions should exist, and thus with this class there is more or less of discontent and inquiry, and their minds are more open and ready to receive new truths which may be presented." Baptist Una Roberts Lawrence was categorical about the role of evangelical

education in motivating "the Cuban . . . to advance his own interests" and predicted: "Education creates a desire for better living conditions, makes boys and girls discontented with old ways of doing things, rouses their minds to wanting some opportunities better than the past offered their parents. Contact with the world will help bring it about, and certainly the awakening power of a vital form of Christianity will play no small part in it."⁶⁵

The evangelical mission thus summoned Cubans to aspire to goals that often were simply unattainable. Hopes were raised and expectations created, then dashed. Episcopal bishop Hiram Hulse gave clear meaning to the evangelical purpose in a 1930 sermon in Havana. "Charity is no longer the contemptuous tossing of a coin to a beggar," insisted Hulse, "but becomes an attempt to put him on his feet and make it possible for him to earn his own living. Christian civilization begins to grow with its different ideals from heathen civilization. The state is seen in its true light as intended for the protection of the individual and so every man has a chance to make the most of himself and not be exploited by the more powerful." Years later, in almost exactly the same terms, Methodist Edgar Nesman recalled the emphasis of sermons "not on giving alms to beggars, but upon assisting the beggar to get on his own two feet to provide for himself to take charge to do something about his lot." In fact, under the conditions prevailing in Cuba, the missionary exhortation to achieve self-sufficiency as a means of self-fulfillment was ill-adapted if not ill-conceived, something that did not begin to become apparent until the 1950s. Nesman realized that perhaps "the way the young person was taught is not really practical for the conditions that actually exist. . . . Closely related to this is the fact that there is just no economic opportunity. . . . No land is available and there are no other professions open, especially without capital."⁶⁴

Vast numbers of Cubans had been intellectually and ideologically shaped by the power of rational argument and positive knowledge, by principles of equality and equity, but were increasingly obliged to experience life as a contradiction between the professed evangelical worldview and the real world of material and social inequality. In many ways, Cubans were prepared to inhabit a world that did not exist—not, at least, in Cuba—but whose oft-proclaimed superiority was routinely transmitted as an article of faith. The extent to which the evangelical imperative may have contributed to discrediting the prevailing order may never be known. But the countless thousands who embraced the Protestant vision were obliged to contemplate their disappointment and consider alternative ways to act on their newfound sense of the possibility of a better life. That Cuban Protestants were so fully represented in the revolutionary struggles of the late 1950s is, of course, suggestive.

Information on church membership is incomplete or otherwise unavailable and hence must remain largely speculative. About 350 organized churches, and at least as many chapels and preaching stations, spanned the island. By the 1950s

several hundred thousand Cubans had joined a total of 500 congregations, by which time Protestant ministers outnumbered Catholic priests and Protestant churches and chapels outnumbered Catholic churches.⁶⁵

By midcentury, too, even as the Catholic church continued to be dominated by Spanish priests, Cubans filled positions of prominence in the clergy of almost all other denominations, including the Baptists (Moisés González, Antonio Martínez, Mario Casanella, Anastasio Díaz), Methodists (Carlos Pérez Ramos, Manuel Viera, Angel Fuster), Presbyterians (Rafel Fernández Ceballos, Sergio Arce, Alfonso Rodríguez Hidalgo), and Quakers (Juan Serra, Maulio Ajo, Manuel Garrido de Catalá). Of the total 23 Episcopal clergymen, 21 were Cuban. Cubans were especially well represented among Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists. Of the total 1,592 Protestant religious workers, more than 85 percent (1,367) were Cuban. In 1940 Merle Davis reported: "The Cuban Evangelical movement is notable for the small number of its foreign missionary workers and for the withdrawal of a large proportion of missionary evangelistic workers from the field with the turning over of this side of the work to Cuban leadership."⁶⁶

The emergence of a Cuban clergy had far-reaching implications. Most immediately, it transformed the composition of the ministry. But more important, it produced a new pluralism. Cubans appropriated the evangelical narrative as a moral and ethical imperative by which to address the national condition. This is not to suggest that Cubans created a new church. They did not. Rather, they transformed the discursive framework of the evangelical mission and in so doing created a new source of power, one dedicated to a national purpose and directed by Cuban leaders. They moved into positions from which to identify injustices and articulate grievances and thereby to create new forms of dissent and provide new ways of popular mobilization. Merle Davis was not the only person who believed that Cuban dedication to *patria* could be a valuable means to defend the church without considering that devotion to the church would also serve to defend *patria*.⁶⁷ Cubans may have indeed adopted the evangelical vernacular and conducted themselves according to its practical dictates. But it was a framework that allowed Cubans to engage North Americans on their own terms and to define Cuban needs as different and distinct.

Evangelicalism had gained adherents from precisely those Cubans who detected in the message of the mission the means of uplift and improvement—just as North Americans had hoped. Cubans adopted and altered the evangelical text to the point where it had acquired special resonance, relevant specifically to daily needs. Under no other circumstances could the Protestant narrative have so seized the popular imagination.

BASEBALL AND BECOMING

The expanding North American presence also was accompanied by new sports and other recreational forms. The Jockey Club was founded in 1899

and included on its board of directors U.S. generals John Brooke, Fitzhugh Lee, William Ludlow, and Adna Chaffee and Cubans Perfecto Lacosta, Saturnino Lastre, Mario G. Menocal, and Rafael de Cárdenas. Two years later John Diamond opened a bowling alley on Zulueta and advertised: "Ladies and gentlemen are cordially invited. Absolutely American style."⁶⁸ Havana acquired three skating rinks: the Novelty Skating Rink, the Broadway Skating Rink, and the American Roller Rink operated by the Richardson Ball-Bearing Skate Company of Chicago. Auto racing began in 1903 with the founding of the Cuban Automobile Association under the leadership of Enrique J. Conill, Julio Blanco Herrera, Ramón Mendoza, and Honoré Lainé, all former residents of the United States. Two years later the Cuban club affiliated with the International Association of Automobile Racing. Havana was selected to host international winter races, attracting drivers, automobile manufacturers, and visitors from around the world.

In the years that followed, clubs centering around North American sports proliferated across the island. The Almandares Yacht Club was chartered in 1901, followed a year later by the Havana Sports Club. Also in 1902 the Vedado Tennis Club—all the names were in English—was founded by Cubans who had taken up tennis during previous residence in the United States. The Vedado Tennis Club expanded into baseball, basketball, and football.⁶⁹ The Riverside Yacht Club sponsored such activities as swimming, handball, and ice skating. Other sports clubs were organized in Cienfuegos, Matanzas, Varadero, Sancti-Spiritus, and Santiago de Cuba. In 1916 President Mario G. Menocal appointed Richard Grant athletic director of the University of Havana, which organized a football team under the direction of U.S. coach James Kendrick. The university and the Vedado Tennis Club inaugurated annual football games, and by the 1910s the University of Havana football team regularly played U.S. college teams.

Sports took hold among all classes, men and women, in the capital and in the provinces. Team sports engaged all sectors of Cuban society, social clubs as well as professional associations, schools, and corporations. The team became one of the most prevalent forms of Cuban social organization, endowed with the capacity to create membership and promote community.

Baseball recaptured public attention immediately after the War of Independence, when professional teams—Habana, Fe, Almandares, Mariano, Santa Clara, and Cienfuegos—resumed play. Public attendance increased. Sunday ball games in Havana routinely attracted five thousand fans weekly. Quaker missionary Zenas Martin expressed dismay at the sight of "thousands of the people" attending the Sunday baseball game in disregard of the Sabbath. The crowds attending ball games in Vedado in the summer of 1900 strained the capacity of the new trolley system, on one occasion causing a near riot. "The management knows that there are always a lot of baseball games going on in that district on Sundays," complained the *Havana Post*; "they should have put on an extra car or more to accommodate the crowd."⁷⁰

In neighborhoods throughout the capital, children took to the streets to play ball. In 1901 the *Diario de la Marina* denounced the "plague" of youngsters playing baseball on the city streets: "Repeated complaints arrive to this office concerning the real scandals occurring on public streets by boys playing baseball. The laws of the city prohibiting those games are ignored and the police appear to be incapable of enforcing them." Ball games were held anywhere open space permitted, and by 1910 the mayor of Havana ordered that baseball be confined to ball parks. "This action," reported *La Lucha*, "tends to avoid the frequent small games seen on the streets and in vacant lots in the city, which often result in bodily harm to passers-by and damage to property, and also to reduce the number of vagrants who devote their energies to the sport during the day instead of being more gainfully employed."⁷¹

Baseball expanded rapidly on the island. In Santiago de Cuba, Baptist missionary H. R. Moseley attributed the decline of Sunday school attendance to the sport. "Since the introduction of Sunday baseball . . .," he complained in 1901, "we find it difficult to hold the boys." Driving across Cuba in 1909, Ralph Estep reached the small town of Macagua (pop. 907): "Being Sunday, it was a day of celebration. There had been a baseball game in which the Pinks beat the Blues. Cuba is baseball crazy. Each country team has dainty cotton flannel suits, which they put on after the game for the purpose of parading around the town." Missionary Una Roberts Lawrence made a similar observation: "Baseball has started on a wave of popularity that promises to place it in the forefront of the amusements of the island. In the afternoons you can drive in any direction from Havana and in the open spaces near the villages and towns there will be a ball game in progress."⁷²

Amateur clubs increased. Some teams adopted patriotic names such as Libertad, Patria, Demajagua, Patriota, Independencia, and '98. Provincial and municipal teams proliferated. So did the school teams, from the University of Havana to secondary and elementary schools, private and public. Teams formed among the various branches of the armed services. Fashionable social clubs of Havana and in the provinces organized baseball teams and established leagues. Corporate teams included Cubaneleco (Cuban Electric Company), Club Teléfono (Cuban Telephone Company), and Club Ferroviario (railroad employees), as well as Partagás and La Corona (individual cigar factories). Many North American corporations sponsored company teams and promoted trade league play. Teams were formed by the Juraguá Iron Company, the Nicaro Mines, and the Cuban Mining Company. Almost all of the larger sugar mills sponsored company teams. Children's teams also multiplied. The Asociación de Béisbol Infantil (Cubanitos) consisted of 1,600 boys between the ages of nine and thirteen organized into sixty teams. It did indeed seem likely, as one observer commented in 1954, that Cuba had more baseball teams per capita than any other Latin American country.⁷³

Baseball leagues increased almost as rapidly as teams, among them the Professional League, Semi-Professional League, Social League, Inter-Provincial League, Youth League, Commercial League, Confederation of Cuban Workers (croc) League, Popular League, National Amateur League, and Mining League, as well as provincial and municipal leagues, including the Liga Popular in Las Villas and the Liga Municipal of Santiago de Cuba. The Sugar League, which consisted of mill teams, produced some of the fiercest rivalries in Cuban baseball, such as Delicias versus Chaparra and Senado versus Lugareño. Katherine Ponvert recalled the intense team rivalry between Hormiguero and Soledad.⁷

Corporate ball clubs were designed to serve the interests of sponsoring companies. North Americans adopted the conventional wisdom that baseball could promote hard work, cooperation, and discipline—the traits most esteemed by employers. Certainly company teams improved morale and goodwill, and, of course, a successful team contributed to a favorable public image. Teams also promoted corporate identity and loyalty to the company. Manuel Rionda considered a \$100 donation to the Elia mill baseball club as a business expense. The Sugar League provided a welcome distraction during the summer months of inactivity, idleness, and unemployment associated with *tiempo muerto*. Rionda expressed concern about dead time between harvests, when “the men having nothing to do and no other topic to discuss they naturally talk about their imaginary grievances and create discontent.” Baseball was an effective way to pass idle time. “As the laborers will have a great deal of time this Dead Season,” reported the administrator of the Manatí mill in 1928, “we have decided to prepare a large field in front of the railroad station so that they can have their base-ball and foot-ball games.” Some U.S. officials believed that baseball could serve as a means of social control. James Sullivan, the U.S. minister in Santo Domingo, wrote:

✓ The American national game of baseball is being played and supported here with great enthusiasm. The remarkable effect of this outlet for the animal spirits of the young men, is that they are leaving the plazas where they were in the habit of congregating and talking revolution and are resorting to the ball fields where they become widely partisan each for his favorite team. The importance of this new interest to the young men in a little country . . . should not be minimized. It satisfies a craving in the nature of the people for exciting conflict and is a real substitute for the contest on the hill-sides with the rifles, if it could be fostered and made important by a league of teams in the various towns in the country . . . [this] well might be one factor in the salvation of the nation.⁷⁵

✓ Baseball also represented economic opportunity. Players recruited from the mill labor force were paid over the course of the dead season. The players of the Thimicú Stars baseball team, for example, received five dollars per game.⁷⁶

Many players developed their skills sufficiently to play in the professional leagues in Cuba. Some reached the major leagues in the United States. Pedro Gómez played for the United Fruit Company before moving up to the Cuban professional leagues and eventually to the Washington Senators, by which time he had adopted the nickname of the mill from which he came: Preston. Orestes “Minnie” Miñoso had played for the España mill team, Tony Taylor for the Alaba team, and Miguel (Mike) Cuéllar for a mill team in Santa Clara. Antanasio (Tony) Pérez was among the last ballplayers from the Sugar League to reach the big leagues after 1959.

Company teams could also foster player solidarity and worker unity. The evidence is scattered and largely anecdotal, and far too much information is lacking to determine with any precision the meaning of company teams for employee players. Teams did give workers the opportunity to come together, travel, and discuss topics of mutual interest. Manuel Fernández Chaveco, a United Fruit Company ballplayer, recounted the ways that baseball facilitated union meetings: “You know we couldn’t meet in public, so we had to meet during our baseball games. We’d hold a big game and during it hold our planning meetings.”⁷⁷

Baseball held the promise of mobility and the possibility of success and stardom, a way up and out of poverty. Many Cuban big-league players shared backgrounds of poverty and hardship. Edmundo “Sandy” Amorós came from a “family [that] was poor and illiterate and worked in the cane fields.” Miñoso recalled hard economic times when his family was forced to take “refuge in what could only be described as a shanty in the sugar cane areas of La Lonja.” “Our baseball has acquired the status of a basic industry,” commented Jess Losada in 1946, “like sugar cane, coffee, and politics. . . . For the new generation there are two goals, two ambitions: a seat in the legislature, where the *guanábana* is always ripe, or a flannel suit of the ballplayer that is valued across the continent at dizzying prices.” In Juan Arcocha’s novel *Los muertos andan solos* (1962), Rogelio had pitched in the Amateur League for La Progresiva. “He would have liked to play professional baseball,” the narrator explains, “and indeed was even scouted by the Washington Senators.” But his arm gave out, and he could no longer pitch: “Rogelio had always thought that was the greatest opportunity of his life and he had lost it. He would have liked to have lived in the United States and earned a great deal of money.”⁷⁸

And, indeed, much of baseball in Cuba was connected to and sustained by baseball in the North. The Cubanitos developed institutional ties with similar organizations in the United States, including the Little League, the Pony League, and the Babe Ruth League. Cuban teams were often incorporated directly into U.S. professional baseball leagues. The Havana Cubans club was organized by Clark Griffith and Roberto Maduro in 1946 to play in the Class B Florida International League. Cuban baseball made an important advance in 1954, when

Maduro established the Cuban Sugar Kings franchise in the AAA International League.

Connections with organized baseball in the United States assumed many forms and worked powerfully to promote affinity and identity with U.S. baseball. Exhibition play expanded. The arrival of major league clubs always provided excitement and expectation to Cuban baseball. Local fans delighted in watching home teams play—and especially defeat—major league clubs. And Cuban teams often acquitted themselves in impressive fashion. In 1908 the Cincinnati Reds lost seven out of eleven exhibition games to Habana and Almendares, and the next year Connie Mack's world champion Philadelphia Athletics lost four out of eight games to the same teams. Also in 1909 the American League champion Detroit Tigers dropped eight out of twelve games to Habana and Almendares. In the years that followed, almost all of the major league clubs played in Cuba—often during spring training games, sometimes in postseason tours—including the Cleveland Indians, Brooklyn Dodgers, St. Louis Cardinals, Boston Red Sox, Pittsburgh Pirates, and New York Giants.

Cubans came to know North American major leaguers firsthand, for many competed in Cuba during the off-season. Celebrity ballplayers often made well-publicized and highly remunerative appearances, especially during the tourist season. In 1920 Babe Ruth received \$2,000 a day for ten days to play several exhibition games with local ball clubs. Increasingly, too, major leaguers played for Cuban professional leagues during the off-season. "Winter ball," as it was known in the United States, allowed North Americans to gain experience and perfect their skills on high-caliber teams. Some of the most successful major leaguers played winter ball on Cuban teams, including, for Cienfuegos: Brooks Robinson, Carl Erskine, Gene Mauch, Sal Maglie, Billy Herman, Don Zimmer, and Joe Black; for Marianao: Roy Campanella, Jim Bunning, Charlie Lau, and Don Newcombe; for Almendares: Tommy Lasorda, Dick Williams, Bob Allison, Roger Craig, Gus Triandos, Jim Grant, Bobby Bragan, Bob Skinner, Billy Hunter, and Willie Mays; for Habana: Ken Boyer, Bill Virdon, Hoyt Wilhelm, Dick Sisler, Wally Moon, and Eddie Kasko. Tommy Lasorda recalled his playing days in Havana fondly—"they took their baseball very serious. Very, very seriously."⁷⁵

Contact with North American clubs and ballplayers changed the character of Cuban baseball. Most directly, it confirmed that Cuban ballplayers could compete at the major league level. They learned that they could hit Christy Mathewson and strike out Ty Cobb. Knuckleballer José Acosta struck out Babe Ruth three times. The major leagues became the standard by which Cuban performance was measured, the standard to which Cuban ballplayers aspired, and the standard that Cuban fans came to expect and demand.

Cuban ballplayers early appeared on many major league rosters. Perhaps more than any other single factor, it was the growing presence of Cuban players in the major leagues that made U.S. baseball so much a part of Cuban life. The

list was long and impressive: in the 1920s and 1930s it included Adolfo Luque, Manuel Otero, Pedro Dibut, and Rafael Almeida (Cincinnati); José Acosta and Jacinto Calvo (Washington Senators); Armando Marsans and Angel Aragón (New York Yankees); Emilio Palmero and Joséto Rodríguez (New York Giants); and Miguel Angel González, Oscar Tuero, and Pájaro Cabrera (St. Louis Cardinals). Others followed in the 1940s and 1950s: Sandy Amorós (Brooklyn Dodgers); Roberto Estalella, Conrado Marrero, Pedro Ramos, and Camilo Pascual (Washington Senators); Minnie Miñoso (Chicago White Sox); Tony Taylor (Philadelphia Phillies); and Willie Miranda (New York Yankees). "The rush of Cubans to the big leagues may cause an appeal for an amendment to the immigration laws," quipped New York sports columnist W. O. McGeehan in 1919 after the Cardinals, led by pitcher Oscar Tuero, had defeated the Giants. "St. Louis and Cincinnati would be out of the league altogether if it were not for their Cuban allies. And to think that Spain had Cuba for all those years without even developing a ballplayer good enough for the Philadelphia Athletics." In fact, so large was the influx of Cubans that White Sox general manager Frank Lane predicted the displacement of American youth from the major leagues. "There is one thing about the Latin-Americans from the Caribbean sector," Lane affirmed in 1952, "they not only love to play, but they're hungry for money. They prove it on the field. They really hustle. I'm afraid the boys in this country have seen too much soft living. They drive cars before they're out of high school. Everything is handed to them on a platter. They no longer have that driving power, motivated by the fierce determination for gold and glory."⁸⁰

Baseball culture had indeed taken hold on the island, the most noteworthy feature of which was the creation of a vast and knowledgeable baseball public. Fans in Cuba followed major league pennant races and the World Series with at least as much enthusiasm as fans in the United States. Major league teams and players were well known and big-league baseball was daily sports news in Cuba. From the conservative *Diario de la Marina* to the communist daily *Hoy*, papers filled with news about the major leagues, including AP and UPI wire stories of the previous day's games, complete with game summaries, box scores, and league standings. In the 1930s radio programming inaugurated live broadcasts directly from the United States. Havana station CMW (Voz de las Antillas) provided a play-by-play broadcast of the 1934 World Series. In the 1950s Cuban television began live broadcasts of major league games.

The fact that Cuban players were often members of pennant-contending teams and appeared in World Series games provided additional excitement. The remarkable sixth-inning catch by Dodger left fielder Sandy Amorós in the seventh game of the 1955 World Series off Yogi Berra, with no one out and the tying runs on base, and then doubling Gil McDougall at first base and clinching the winning game (2-0) of the first Dodger World Series victory, made Amorós a hero in both Brooklyn and Cuba. "The most spectacular catch of the series," Roy



Camilo Pascual (Major Leagues, 1954-71) played for the Washington Senators, Minnesota Twins, Cincinnati Reds, Los Angeles Dodgers, and Cleveland Indians. (Courtesy of the National Baseball Hall of Fame Library and Archive, Cooperstown, N.Y.)

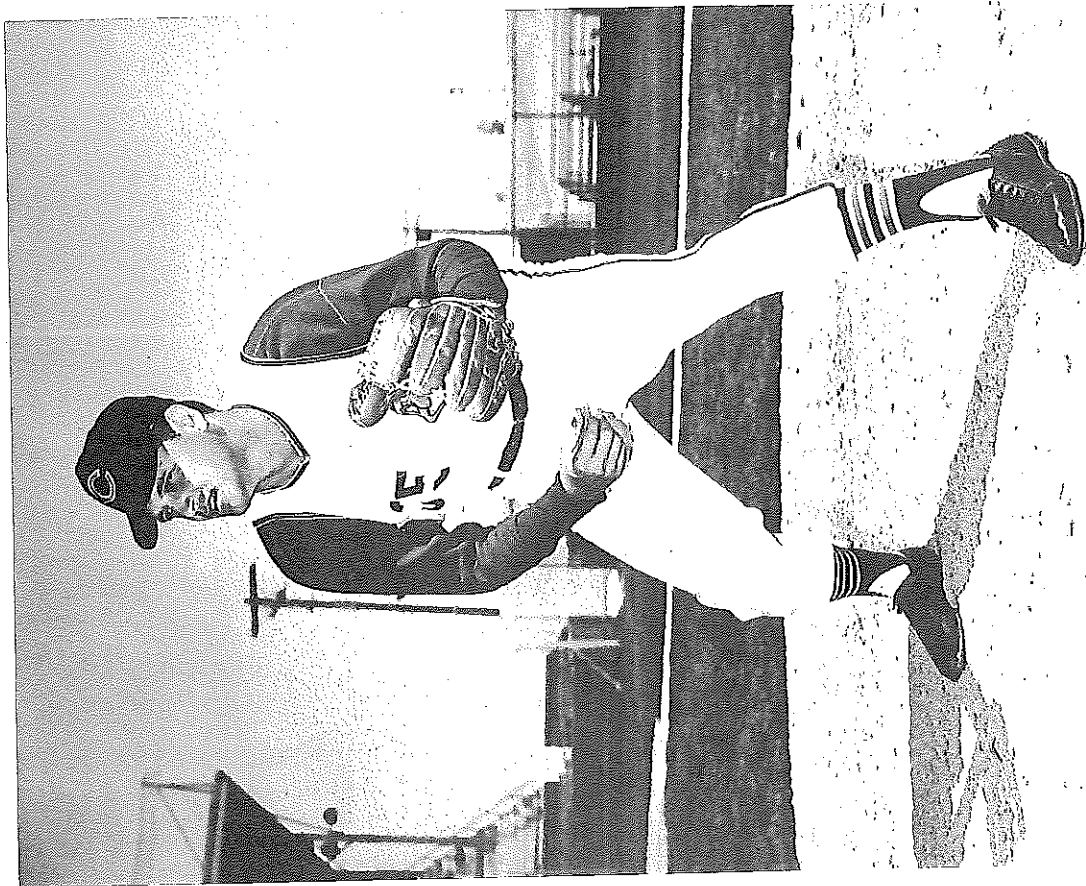
Campanella later declared. For one brief moment, the World Series victory belonged to Cuba. "Amorós, hero of the year," proclaimed *Carteles*. *Bohemia* published a full-page photograph of Amorós over the caption: "His performance in the World Series has produced intense joy in our nation." His deeds signified a "triumph and corroboration for the quality of our sports" and "assure him a place of honor in the history of the pastime of Cuba."⁸¹

Life in Cuba often focused entirely on the U.S. World Series. The autumn of



Orestes "Minnie" Miñoso (Major Leagues, 1949-64) played for the Chicago White Sox, St. Louis Cardinals, and Washington Senators. (Courtesy of the National Baseball Hall of Fame Library and Archive, Cooperstown, N.Y.)

1952 was a time of deepening political crisis in Cuba. The anti-Machado forces had assassinated Clemente Vázquez Bello, president of the Senate; the government responded with the murder of Representative Gonzalo Freyre de Andrade and his two brothers, Leopoldo and Guillermo. Representative José M. Aguiar was gunned down at his front door. October also saw the World Series between the New York Yankees and the Chicago Cubs, and Cuban attention seemed transfixed not on the national crisis but on the national pastime. Mariblanca Sabas



Pedro "Pete" Ramos (Major Leagues, 1955-70) played for the Washington Senators, Minnesota Twins, Cleveland Indians, New York Yankees, Philadelphia Phillies, Pittsburgh Pirates, and Cincinnati Reds. (Courtesy of the National Baseball Hall of Fame Library and Archive, Cooperstown, N.Y.)

Alomá could hardly contain her indignation. "We are irresponsible!" she thundered. "The bodies of five prominent Cuban figures are still not even buried, and I hear many men of my country heatedly debate the possibilities of the New York American League team against the Chicago National League team. Five assassinations right here in the capital that have not in the slightest diminished the



Edmundo "Sandy" Amorós (Major Leagues, 1952-60) played for the Brooklyn Dodgers and Detroit Tigers. (Courtesy of the National Baseball Hall of Fame Library and Archive, Cooperstown, N.Y.)

extraordinary enthusiasm of the Cuban fans. Days that should be given to mourning have been spent by the radio that is transmitting the World Series.⁸² Nothing changed in the ensuing years except that pennant races and World Series play claimed even greater attention. "Business comes to a halt for a few hours each day of the series games," deplored the *Times of Havana* in 1958, with a sense of relief, it added: "Now that the World Series has ended life can be expected to return to normal both in the United States and Cuba." Fidel Castro

would recount to Dan Rather on the CBS documentary "The Last Revolutionary" (July 7, 1996) how, during the height of the insurrection against Fulgencio Batista, the guerrilla commanders halted operations to listen to the final game of the 1957 World Series between the New York Yankees and the Milwaukee Braves.⁸³

The Cuban connection to U.S. baseball certainly transformed the character and quality of the sport in Cuba. But over the longer run, it also contributed to changing the nature of baseball in the United States. Not all of the best Cuban players reached the major leagues, of course. Nationality could obscure racial categories but only up to a point, beyond which considerations of color prevailed. And it was precisely color that barred many of the greatest Cuban ballplayers from reaching the major leagues, including José Méndez, Martín Dihigo, Cristóbal Torriente, and Luis Tiant Sr. "It is clear," feature sports writer Manuel F. de la Reguera observed in 1936 after the Cuban defeat of the Cincinnati Reds and St. Louis Cardinals in successive exhibition games in Havana, "that racial prejudice prevents many Cubans from playing on the best teams of the majors. Their quality is clearly demonstrated in the exhibition games when the color line is removed and their talents are fully manifested."⁸⁴

Baseball directly involved Cubans in the complexities of North American race relations, a process fostering multifaceted collaborations that eventually contributed to changing the very character of baseball in the United States. Barred from the big leagues, black ballplayers in Cuba and the United States joined together to sustain a level of quality equal to the standards and traditions of the major leagues.⁸⁵

African American players could not help noticing the growing Cuban presence in the major leagues and immediately understood the implications. The Cuban success in reaching the big leagues suggested possible strategies to overcome racial barriers in the United States. The presence of Armando Marsans and Rafael Almeida in the major leagues, commented the *New York Age* in 1911, "is of great significance and will have great bearing on the future destiny of colored men in 'baseball'; it predicted: "With the admission of Cubans of a darker hue in the two big leagues it would be easy for colored players who are citizens of this country to get into fast company." The *Age* noted that "the Negro in this country has more varied hues than even the Cubans" and suggested that "until the public got accustomed to seeing native Negroes on big leagues, the colored players could keep their mouths shut and pass for Cubans."⁸⁶

In fact, African American ballplayers did contemplate the possibility of reaching the big leagues as Cubans. Catcher Irwin Sandy played with the Providence Grays of the National League and with Baltimore of the American Association as "Vicente Nava." On several occasions management encouraged talented black prospects to assume Cuban identities. One club in the New York State League offered outfielder John Donaldson \$10,000 to visit Cuba, adopt a Spanish name, and report to the club as a Cuban. Quincy Troupe later told of

being encouraged by a scout to go to "a Latin country and learn Spanish," suggesting that speaking Spanish would ease his way into the major leagues. John Bud Fowler, released from white teams in the early 1890s, experienced difficult times on the barnstorming circuit. "It was hard picking for a colored player this year," he wrote in 1895, "I didn't pick up a living; I just existed. If I had not been quite so black, I might have caught on as a Spaniard or something of that kind." In the 1976 film version of *Bingo Long Traveling All-Stars*, Charlie Snow (Richard Pryor) studies a "Spanish phrase book" and practices speaking a heavily Spanish-accented English. "From now on," he announces midway through the film, "I am going to be known as Carlos Nevada"; "I am going to break into the majors as a Cuban!"⁸⁷

"Cuban" was also incorporated into the identity of several clubs of the old Negro Leagues. One of the first professional African American ball clubs called itself the "Cuban Giants." Organized in 1885 by the waiters of the Argyle Hotel in Babylon, New York, players sought to pass for Cuban at a time of deepening racial tension in the United States. "The team was sensitive to mounting racism," wrote Janet Bruce, historian of the Kansas City Monarchs, "and as 'Cubans' clowning in a gibberish Spanish on the field, they were safer from white fans when they defeated white teams." Sol White, who played for the Cuban Giants, recalled that when the "first team began playing away from home, they passed as foreigners—Cubans, as they finally decided—hoping to conceal the fact that they were just American Negro hotel waiters, and talked a gibberish to each other on the field which, they hoped, sounded like Spanish."⁸⁸

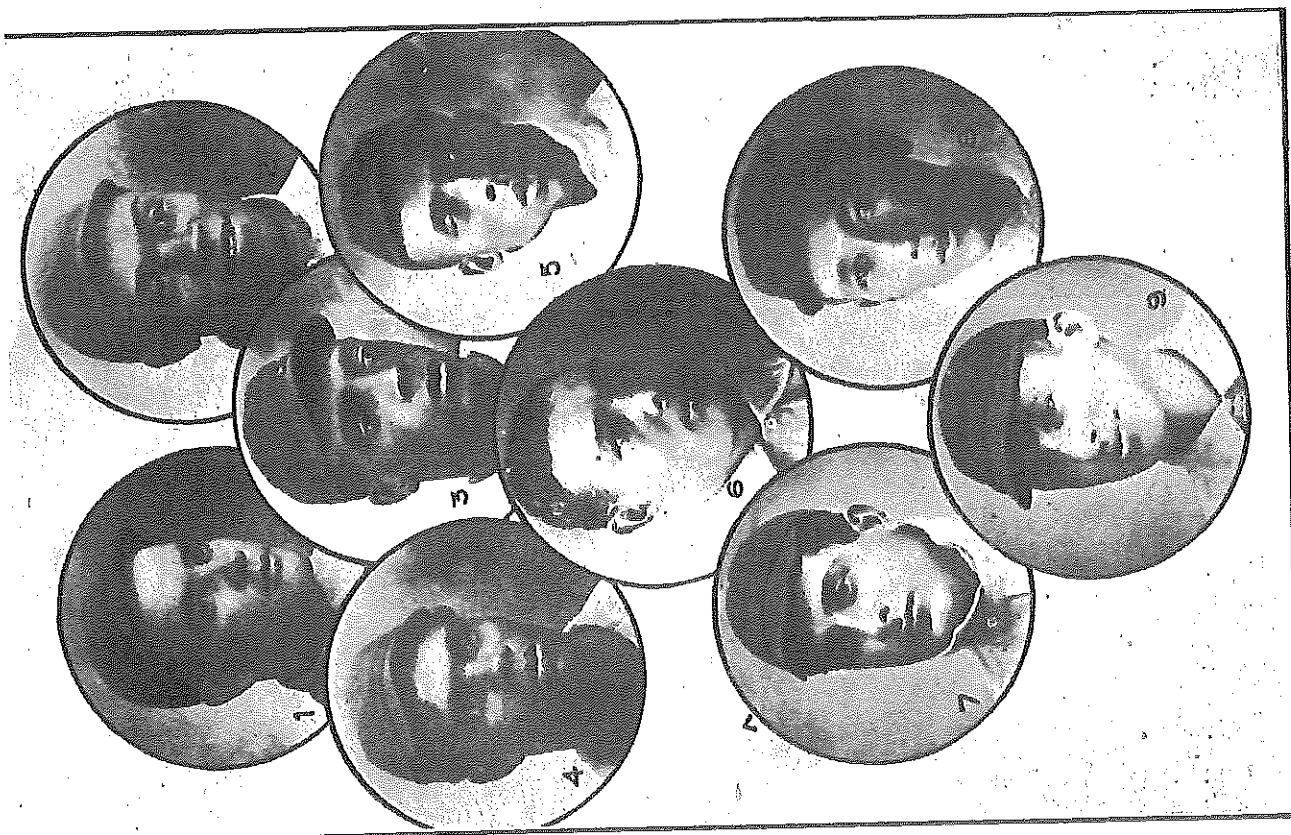
Other teams followed this practice. The Cuban X-Giants was organized in 1896 by former Cuban Giants. There were also the Long Branch Cubans, Ansonia Cuban Giants, Genuine Cuban Giants, Havana Red Sox, and Jersey City Cubans. Sid Pollock, the owner of the Indianapolis Clowns, organized the Cuban House of David club managed by Ramiro Ramírez. In the original novel *The Bingo Long Traveling All-Stars and Motor Kings* (1973) by William Brasler, the team played "the big teams like the Detroit Cubans" and often contemplated barnstorming across Cuba.⁸⁹

Cuban teams, for their part, Anglicized their names and enjoyed considerable success competing against teams in the Negro Leagues. In 1899 the Cuban Stars inaugurated annual summer trips north, which continued through the 1930s. Other teams included the All-Cubans, Stars of Cuba, Santiago Stars, and Havana All-Stars. The Cuban team in the Florida International League was known by its English name, the Havana Cubans, as was the AAA International League team, the Cuban Sugar Kings. At various times Cuban teams joined the National Negro Baseball Association (1920), Negro National League (1922), and Eastern Colored League (1923). The National Negro Baseball Association consisted of the American Giants (Chicago), Chicago Giants, St. Louis Giants, Monarchs (Kansas City), ABCs (Indianapolis), Marcos (Dayton), and Cuban Stars, desig-

nated as a traveling team and consigned to play its entire season on the road. The Eastern Colored League also incorporated a Cuban club, the New York Cubans, managed by Alejandro Pompey, made up primarily of Afro-Cubans, including Martín Dihigo, Luis Tiant, Ramón Bragaña, Silvio García, Lázaro Salazar, and Francisco Correa.⁹⁰

Cubans also appeared on the roster of Negro League teams. José Méndez, Cristóbal Torriente, Martín Dihigo, José Colas, José Burgos, Luis Márquez, and Luis Tiant, among others, played variously with the Memphis Red Sox, Chicago American Giants, Pittsburgh Crawfords, Birmingham Black Barons, Homestead Grays, and Kansas City Monarchs. And African American ballplayers played winter ball in Cuba. Among the members of Cuban teams were John Henry Lloyd (Philadelphia Giants), Grant Johnson (Brooklyn Royal Giants), Bruce Petway (Chicago Leland Giants), Joe Williams (Royal Poinciana), Dick Redding (Lincoln Giants), and Frank Duncan (Philadelphia Giants). This experience allowed many African Americans to become full-time professional ballplayers and earn a living during the off-season. Cuba also offered greater social space within and across ambiguous racial boundaries. This was not a racially egalitarian society, to be sure, but it stood in sharp contrast to the rigid and explicit color barriers that prevailed in the United States. Pitcher Max Manning recalled one trip to Havana: "We got on the train in Philadelphia, and we had to stay in a colored only compartment. We couldn't ever leave to get some food. When we finally arrived in Cuba, we were treated as heroes. We could stay at any hotel, eat at any restaurant."⁹¹

In an integrated environment African Americans received confirmation that they could play at least as well as whites. They faced some of the best major leaguers: as batters against big-league pitching, as pitchers against big-league hitting. African American players on Cuban teams excelled against visiting major-league clubs. In the 1910 Detroit Tigers-Habana series, Ty Cobb batted for a .370 average, whereas John Henry Lloyd hit .500, Grant Johnson .412, and Bruce Petway .390—all against major league pitching. In competing with major leaguers, both from Cuba and the United States, African Americans took measure of their abilities against big-league standards and thus competed as equals. Frank Duncan and Newt Joseph, who often played in Cuba, concluded that Cuban major leaguers were not as good as black ballplayers from the United States. Quite a few Cubans, they observed, "who on account of their white skin gain entry into the big leagues . . . come home and play in the [winter] league, but as a rule, as strange as it might seem, they do not measure up to the high standard of the American Negro ballplayer." Adolfo Luque of the Cincinnati Reds was "a splendid pitcher in the big leagues but can't win against the colored boys in the Cuban league." Pitcher Emilio Palmero of the Washington Senators had "failed to come up to the standard against the colored hitter," and catcher Miguel Angel González of the St. Louis Cardinals "did not show extraordinary ability."⁹²



1—Gonzalo Sanchez, catcher. 2—Sam Lloyd, short stop. 3—Ricardo Hernández, outfielder. 4—Preston Hill, outfielder. 5—Grant Johnson, short stop y second base. 6—Luis Padron, right fielder. 7—J. H. Magrini, outfielder. 8—Carlos Moran, third base. 9—Camilo Valdes, mascot. JUGADORES DEL "HABANA."

A team portrait of the Habana Baseball Club with African American players, 1911. (Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.)

In the Cuban leagues black players from the United States developed the confidence that they could compete with the best white players in the majors. "I knew we were ready in 1942," recalled pitcher Dave Barnhill. "I played against quite a few big leaguers in Cuba. I pitched against Bob Lemon. I played against Johnny Mize." For pitcher Max Manning, the experience in Cuba was decisive. He later reminisced about defeating the Almendares team made up of Solly Hemus, Danny Gardella, Chuck Connors, and Max Lanier: "That game gave me a big boost. I always had an inner confidence in myself in terms of major league competition. I never had any inner doubts in my mind about that."⁹³

The Cuban connection had lasting consequences for the development of baseball in the United States. Baseball in Cuba provided an environment that was unavailable in the major leagues. Teams were fully integrated: black and white Cubans played with and against black and white North Americans. Within the ambiguity of Cuban race relations, a condition noteworthy for blurred color lines and shifting racial dichotomies, black and white ballplayers from the United States were free to mingle, to play together on the same teams and on opposing teams, which would have been all but inconceivable in the United States.

Baseball in Cuba contributed to transforming major league play in the United States. U.S. racial barriers were first broken in Cuba. White major leaguers received their first experience of integrated baseball while playing winter ball in Cuba, where they developed professional respect and personal ties with African American players. Integrated baseball in Cuba served as a transition to integrated baseball in the United States. Dodger pitcher Carl Erskine later reflected that Cuba was "a good training ground" for playing on an integrated team. Black and white ballplayers from the United States, knowing no Spanish, were often drawn together as visitors in a foreign country. In a comprehensive history of the Negro Leagues, Donn Rogosin wrote of the friendship that developed in Cuba between Willie Wells and Johnny Dunlap of the Boston Braves, who became roommates while playing for Almendares. "One day, while at the race track," Rogosin wrote, "Dunlap spied Early Wynn, who was pitching for Havana that year. 'Earl, come on over and have a beer,' invited Dunlap. Wynn took one look at Dunlap's dark-complexioned companion and said, 'I don't drink with niggers.' 'What'd you say?' quizzed Dunlap. 'You heard what I said, I don't drink with niggers,' responded Early Wynn. Dunlap swiftly got up and broke Early Wynn's jaw. Wynn pitched no more in the winter league that year."⁹⁴

Thus it was that Cuba served as the site of preparation for the integration of major league baseball. Branch Rickey opened the 1947 Dodgers spring training camp in Havana, in part to avoid the hostile segregationist environment of Florida, in part to field an integrated team in an environment where mixed teams were the norm. Four black ballplayers joined the spring training that year: Don Newcombe, Roy Campanella, Roy Partlow, and Jackie Robinson. Baseball was changed permanently.⁹⁵

It was not at all clear that Cubans were mindful of their role in the transformation of baseball in the United States. Most were absorbed in meanings that were special inside Cuba. Baseball had become a national passion. Its popularity cut across lines of class and age and transcended boundaries of race and gender; it appealed to urban residents and rural inhabitants and united Cubans of all political and ideological persuasions. A 1953 survey revealed that more than 70 percent of all Cubans considered themselves baseball fans, including 82 percent of the men and almost 60 percent of the women. More than 75 percent of the upper class (*las clases pudientes*), 67 percent of the middle class, and more than 75 percent of the working class were identified as baseball *aficionados*. The Cuban people, *Bohemia* commented, regarded baseball "as something very intimate, something very much theirs, as a nearly sacred institution." Fan support of the "national sport" was unlimited "in sacrifice, in emotion, in money. [There] is no other activity . . . that commands as much popular sympathy as baseball." By all standards, *Bohemia* concluded, baseball had long ceased to be a "private business" and assumed the form of "a great public spectacle of positive national preponderance." Writer Mario Vidal made similar observations. "Is there anyone in Cuba today, young or old, man or woman, rich or poor, who does not talk about baseball in all parts at all times?" Vidal asked rhetorically. Enthusiasm for baseball had "displaced political discussions . . . and the high cost of living. The citizen can do without everything: without bread, without meat, without lard: he has baseball. Sports fanaticism has done away with all other fanaticisms. Neither communism nor fascism: baseball. Sports stars have eclipsed the great political leaders. Not a single one of them, not even the most popular has mobilized the masses in Cuba the way baseball is currently doing." Historian Hermínio Portell Vilá, who often wrote about sports, always took note of the special place of baseball. "On the afternoons, any day while there is sun light," he observed, "on Saturdays and Sundays, there is no space in this capital that is not filled by groups of boys playing baseball and imitating the gestures, mannerisms, and ways of professional ballplayers, whose names they often adopt as nicknames." Portell Vilá concluded: "The picture that I have just described can be seen in Guanabacoa and Marianao, in Matanzas and Artemisa and everywhere in the country: it is a madness of baseball." Gustavo Robreño recalled his youth in his partly autobiographical novel *La acera del Louvre* (1925). "In theaters, in cafés, in clubs and at dances, in the *paseos*, everywhere in fact, baseball was discussed," muses the protagonist. "Young and old, rich and poor, all were afflicted by the contagion. I would not dare attempt to distinguish with any certainty who in Cuba enjoyed the greatest popularity: whether it would be Montoro, Sanguily, Fernández de Castro and Figueroa—our acclaimed political leaders—or Carlos Maciá—the best player of his time—[and] Adolfo Luján the durable pitcher."⁹⁶

Political leaders of all party affiliations and ideologies sought to identify

themselves with baseball. "Many politicians," observed a traveler in 1957, "use the ball park to advance their personal campaigns and make it a point to be seen in attendance there as an election nears." Colonel Fulgencio Batista threw out the first pitch to inaugurate the new season in 1935. The following year President Miguel Mariano Gómez tossed the first ball to begin the 1936 championship series—one of his last public acts before being ousted by Colonel Batista. Of the start of the 1936 season, *Bohemia* commented: "Our most important and distinguished personalities, as much from politics as from government and sports, were present to witness the games."⁹⁷ At least one ballplayer, Baldomero Acosta, parlayed his popularity to win elected office as Liberal Party mayor of Marianao.

Local politicians were not the only ones who sought to generate goodwill through baseball. In 1955 U.S. ambassador Arthur Gardner established the "Arthur Gardner Trophy," awarded annually to the outstanding player of the Cuban winter league. The first two awards were given to Camilo Pascual and Minnie Miñoso. Indeed, throughout the 1950s the U.S. embassy promoted baseball in Cuba as part of a larger Cold War strategy. In 1950 cultural affairs officer Jacob Canter urged the U.S. State Department to create a program to allow Cubans to train in the United States during which "players would be introduced to other aspects of American civilization besides that of baseball." Three years later a new cultural affairs officer reminded the State Department that "baseball provides an unusually good opportunity for reaching primary usis [U.S. Information Service] target audiences." Similarly, pro-U.S. groups in Cuba detected in baseball a way to improve U.S.-Cuba relations. The Comité Nacional Acera del Louvre supported the game as a part of its efforts "to promote friendship" and "work for the spread of American type democracy." The Comité Nacional repeatedly affirmed its support of baseball "for the moral and physical improvement of our youth and the betterment of relations with the American people."⁹⁸

Through good times and bad, in periods of economic depression and political crisis, baseball persisted as a source of national identity and collective unity. During the 1920 stock market crash sports writer Guillermo Pi described the "multitudes crowded in front of the entrance to Almendares ball park, the streets leading to the stadium covered by an ocean of Fords (*foringsos*). Pi concluded: "The people love their favorite sport, despite the times and all calamities. It is the temporary panacea of all their woes." During the economic collapse and political crises of the 1930s, fan enthusiasm escalated. Baseball seemed to offer stability and continuity at a time of uncertainty and insecurity. Adolfo Font reflected on the meaning of increasing ball park attendance: "Baseball, during our most difficult national struggle, has united Cubans in a close and sincere embrace. . . . In these hours of uncertainty, in these times when Cuban society is so divided, [baseball] serves anew to recreate affection, true patriotism, and the serenity of all."⁹⁹

Many observers noted the capacity of baseball to bring Cubans together, to

unite otherwise politically divided and ideologically diverse factions around the all-encompassing category of nationality. This was one more way that a sense of nation assumed form. Cuban appropriation of baseball must be viewed as a highly complex process of socialization and national dialogue. Participation provided access to equality, an opportunity to compete and prevail within a North American framework and thereby affirm the value and validity of being Cuban by meeting—and surpassing—standards set and recognized in the United States.

Cuban achievements, attained within structures and rules to which all participants subscribed and were subjected equally, provided a basis on which to measure self-worth and demonstrate the capacity to compete and prevail. In Felipe Rodríguez's "Los subalternos," sports offered Cuban employees of the "Yucayo Sugar Company" parity with North American administrators. "At this mill," protagonist Felipe Peña explains to administrator Ted Darlings, "those of us from here have only had the option of watching you all play tennis. I am going to organize the boys around sports, . . . to play against you in anything, and win, to prove that they too have the stuff of top quality, what you call 'concentration' and what I call the 'aptitude for collective effort.'" The narrator concluded: "From that day Felipe Peña . . . began the task and in a short time the Cubans had organized a sports club . . . and they won and lost in baseball and tennis. . . . For the first time in his life Felipe Peña looked upon his friends and brothers with pride, without feeling like a subordinate. . . . This small achievement made him aware of a realizable hope: that our Spanish America has a defined path toward civilization . . . by way of collective work to give competition value and importance."¹⁰⁰

Sports offered the basis on which to stake a claim to membership in the community of civilized nations of the world. "It requires little study," José Sixto de Sola affirmed in 1914, "to see that in all countries, and especially those who in this century are in the forefront of civilization, sports of all types are accorded increasing importance." Success in sports competition contributed to "forming and fortifying the pride that each citizen has in belonging to the nation from which such deeds and persons originate." Sola drew his moral explicitly: "In sports, Cubans are notable and outstanding; their success has been complete, extraordinary, and at times simply marvelous." It was necessary to recognize the importance of sports "to the cause of Cuban nationality." Cuban success, especially in competing with the foreigner, provided "pleasure and pride in being Cuban." This was a way for Cuba to attain stature in a world otherwise dominated by such great powers as England, France, Germany, and the United States. "The remarkable triumphs of Cubans in the sports of those countries . . ." Sola insisted, "well out of proportion to the size of the national territory and the number of inhabitants, necessarily obliges that our name as a civilized nation . . . reaches the highest levels of glory." He asked rhetorically: "How can it not be important—very important—that among those countries, and especially in the North American Union, where sports are accorded the highest honor among

activities considered noble and exalted, that the name of Cuba be accorded esteem, consideration, and respect?"¹⁰¹

Sports provided a way to project an international presence, and hence promote national esprit de corps, a means of affirmation and a source of differentiation, of parity and prestige. The subtext was embedded most notably in baseball as Cuba worked through a complex relationship with the United States. "What Cuban who has attended a baseball game between Almendares [baseball team] and one of the great North American major league teams that has visited us in recent years," Sola asked, "has not felt linked to our players and the rest of the fans by a powerful bond?" He continued:

What a magnificent event, and rich in sentiments useful for Cuba. . . . A multitude of ten, twelve or fourteen thousand souls, overcome, waiting breathlessly, for a Cuban triumph. And after having obtained the sensational victory, this same multitude, on its feet and acclaiming the players with a frenzied clamor, subsequently pouring like torrents throughout the city, carrying joy to all parts of the city, a joy that passes from the city to the rest of the island, becoming unanimous from Maisí to San Antonio [i.e., from one end of the island to the other].

Sola concluded: "What is it that produces such intense enthusiasm, so deliriously, so unanimously? Ah! It is the national sentiment. They are all Cubans and they feel Cuban." José Soler Puig's novel *En el año de enero* (1963) captured some of this sentiment as Juan muses: "I love Cuba. It's my country. . . . I want it to progress, that it be the first in the world. I am delighted even when Camilo Pascual wins a game, up there [in the United States], in baseball. And I don't know Camilo nor do I care what kind of person he is. Only that he is Cuban." In similar fashion Jess Losada observed in the 1936 St. Louis-Habana series that Julio Blanco Herrera, the Tropical Beer magnate who constructed the Tropical Stadium, had "achieved what no provisional government had been able to accomplish: bringing together all sectors and beliefs. In the Tropical Stadium gather fraternally the conservative, the liberal, the republican, the communist, the Auténtico, the *abecedario*, the *panista*, the influence peddler, the soldier, the hustler, and the loudmouth." Almost twenty years later José Agustín Martínez, after attending a Cuban Sugar Kings ball game at Gran Stadium, similarly observed: "It was remarkable, the wholesome joy, the patriotic spirit of that mass of humanity that shook the air with its yells, with its songs, with the explosions of delirious support for the players who defended at that moment in the public imagination, the national flag as if we were in full war and that was actual combat between two armies, and not a passing sports event." Mario Guiral Moreno, who saw the Havana Sugar Kings defeat Syracuse in 1955, commented on the "special significance" of baseball, its capacity "to awaken patriotic sentiment among our people."¹⁰²

Baseball figured in the continuing national narrative of progress and modernity, a means to verify and validate the claim to civilization. Baseball suggested a moral code as well as an ethical order to inspire private life and inform public conduct. Renderings that resonated in the nineteenth century continued to shape the Cuban association with baseball in the twentieth. Physician José Antonio López del Valle thought much about the sport, about its greater meaning and value. Baseball was "a school for practical philosophy," with lessons for all facets of life: "It teaches us 'to want' to win and 'to know' how to lose. To realize maximum efforts for victory and have gracious resignation in defeat. To sit down on the 'bench' when it is not our time. To concentrate energies and apply them at the precise moment. . . . To love the flag. The power of unity." These virtues were useful not only in a person's daily life, but also for the life of a nation. According to López de Valle:

[Baseball] is a school of discipline and respect of the decision, of obedience to orders, of submission to authority. There are, to be sure, infractions. But they cost dearly immediately. They are the causes of defeats, and public condemnation of those who make them. . . . It is a school to learn and a magnificent stage on which later to display agility, fortitude, and dexterity in the realm of ideas and actions. . . . And everything is in a congenial ambience, of democracy, of cordial camaraderie, in fresh air and an open field. . . . It creates a spirit of tolerance, of goodwill, of forbearance, and true brotherhood: of love!

Columnist Hernández Travieso addressed the larger implications of baseball: "To know how to lose with elegance and grace is as important for a citizen of a democracy as knowing how to win without bluster and contempt for the defeated. It is the essence of democracy. It is that phrase coined by the Anglo-Saxons, 'to be a good sport,' that perhaps contains the secret of the success of their political institutions, and in our not knowing it—not when we win or when we lose: the failure of ours."¹⁰³

The notion of baseball as a "school" had other applications. The creation of the Cubanitos was in large measure inspired by the regenerative powers attributed to baseball. "To take a boy off the streets by way of baseball," wrote Armando Villegas of the promise of the Cubanitos, "to see him through school and discipline him for the future, to shape his character and [promote] good habits, in that manner to fight illiteracy and juvenile delinquency—that is the fundamental objective of the Cubanitos."¹⁰⁴

Nationality was subsumed within the narrative of baseball. The team represented nation in Pan American games, the Caribbean World Series, and Central American competition. Nowhere perhaps was this issue of identity so sharply etched, however, as when Cuban teams played North Americans. These meetings were replete with meaning and metaphor. It seemed always to have been thus—when Cuban teams played against U.S. teams in spring training exhibition games and postseason play, when they joined the Florida International

League and later the A.A.A. International League. Cubans always seemed to imply a subtext in the competition with North Americans. During a series of exhibition games between St. Louis and Habana and Almendares, Jess Losada characterized the Cardinals as "representing royalism [and] Habana and Almendares were democratic forces. It was, hence, a class struggle." And when a Cuban umpire called a close play in favor of St. Louis, "the fans disagreed, and they came to their feet as an imposing mass and cried out that the empire had sold out to *yamqui* imperialism."¹⁰⁵

The English language obtained another point of entry through sports. Indeed, it would have been all but impossible to understand basketball, boxing, and baseball without English. Basketball relied on such usage as "los oficiales del floor," "el varsity femenino," "el time keeper," "el foul," "el coach," and "el referee." Boxing called upon phrases like "un star bout de 5 rounds," "van al clinch," "el ring del Havana Boxing," "el campeón mundial light weight," "regresa en pos de un come back," and "su jab izquierdo y el uppercut derecho." *El Mundo's* account of Rocky Marciano's defeat of Joe Wolcott in 1953 included such phrasing as "un formidable uppercut," "el knockout," "el primer round," and "estaba groggy." But it was most of all baseball about which it would have been impossible to report or read without knowing the game in English. A *La Correspondencia* account of a baseball game in Cienfuegos used such terms as "el fuerte team," "un fly a primera out," "López da un foul," and "el sexto inning."¹⁰⁶ The language used in the sports section of *El Mundo* during the early 1950s suggests the degree to which baseball was a game understood in English:

El score final	Un flai al center
En el primer inning	Salió de su slump
El double play	Notable infielder
Unico hit	Con Fonseca at bat
El primer rally	Buenos hitters
Después de haber sido out	Un squeeze play
Un infield hit	Un wild pitch
Un lineazo entre center y right	Sobre el average de 300
Un juego de extra-innings	

English words were also rendered phonetically in Spanish. To knock out became "noquear," to jab was "jabear."¹⁰⁷ In baseball, this practice produced a new vernacular:

jonrón (home run)	roleteó (rolled out)
tubey (two-base hit)	pitchear (to pitch)
tribey (three-base hit)	fildeador (outfielder)
batear (to bat)	aut (out)
flai (fly)	straik (strike)

Baseball reached deeply into the popular consciousness and, in ways not dissimilar to those in the United States, provided the means to assemble representations of reality. It insinuated itself into popular idioms and provided allegories for daily living. Cuban idiomatic expression drew heavily on baseball metaphors to describe conditions and circumstances unconnected with the sport. To be "entre 3 y 2" (between 3 and 2) was to be under intense pressure calling for decisive action. "No pasó la primera" (did not reach first base) signified failure. "Tirar una curva" (to throw a curve ball) suggested deception. "Batear un jonrón" (to hit a home run), "botar la pelota" (to hit the ball out of sight as in a home run), and "dar un batazo" signified great success, whereas "no llegar a jonrón" meant achieving only partial success. To "ponchar" (to be punched out as in a called strike three) referred to a mishap or defeat ranging from having a flat tire to failing a test. "Es un flai" (it's a pop-up) signified an automatic out and thus implied failure and disappointment. "Bola" (ball) found many usages: "no tener nada en la bola" (to have nothing on the ball) was to be without influence, whereas "tener mucho en la bola" (to have much on the ball) was to be very intelligent; "una bola de humo" (a full ball, i.e., "smoke") was to be exceptionally talented, whereas "llegar como bola de humo" was to arrive rapidly; to have "la bola escondida" (hidden ball) was to succeed through subterfuge; "cambiar de bola" (to change balls) was to change one's opinion, and "tirarle a alguien con la bola mala" was to deceive someone; "aclarar la bola" was to explain an idea. "No haber por donde batear" (no place to bat) described a problem without a solution. "Tirar una nokel bol" (to throw a knuckleball) was to prepare an ambush, and "coger fuera de base" (picked off) was to take by surprise. To be "un pitcher de grandes ligas" (a big-league pitcher) was to excel in something. "Batear las dos manos" (to bat as a switch hitter) was to be bisexual; "jugar en las dos novenas" (to play on both teams) could also imply bisexuality or taking both sides of an issue. "Quieto en base" (remain on base) referred to staying put or remaining silent.¹⁰⁸

Baseball metaphors also entered the vernacular in wholly improvised fashion as a way to communicate a condition in the most fundamental and hence most comprehensible form. Visiting Holguín in 1937, Jess Losada recalled the Machado years, when Captain Arsenio Ortiz, known for brutal repression of the opposition, was dispatched to Oriente to end antigovernment activities. Losada likened Ortiz to "the dictator's closing relief pitcher" (pitcher tapón) in the Oriente region." When in 1960 Fidel Castro denounced U.S. support of dictators in Latin America, he alluded to the practice whereby an incumbent dictator was "benched, retired to the bull pen for a while in order to use him again" (se lo pusieron en un banco, lo retiraron al 'bull-pen' un tiempo para volverlo a usar). In Robreño's *La acera del Louvre*, Pepe objects to the use of a baseball analogy to characterize his misfortune. "I am not talking about baseball at this moment, nor do I think it appropriate to mix the sport in this serious matter"—to which

the protagonist responds: "Well, I do: facets of baseball have relevance to all situations of life."¹⁰⁹

Cubans also played a major role in disseminating baseball elsewhere in Latin America. During the nineteenth century Cubans emigrated throughout the Caribbean and almost immediately on arrival established ball clubs. As early as the 1870s, émigrés went to the Dominican Republic to organize sugar production in the southeastern plains of San Pedro de Macoris and La Romana. Baseball soon followed. Shortly thereafter, the brothers Ignacio and Ubaldo Alomá arrived in Santo Domingo from Cienfuegos and within months had organized two baseball teams. During the 1890s Havana cigar manufacturer Emilio Cramer went to Caracas to establish La Cubana cigarette factory. Together with other émigrés and Venezuelans, Cramer organized a Caracas city league of five teams. At about the same time, the Cuban émigré community in the Yucatán introduced baseball in Mérida and Progreso. The local municipal teams suggested the origins of the organizers: Cuba Baseball Club, Habana Baseball Club, and Matanzas Baseball Club. In the 1920s and 1930s Cuban teams traveled throughout the region to play local teams. In the late 1950s the Cuban Triple A club, the Cuba Sugar Kings, played a series of exhibition games in Mérida and Managua annually. Cubans also comprised the largest group of foreigners playing in the four-team (León, Boer, San Fernando, and Granada) Nicaraguan league. León, Boer, and San Fernando were managed by Cubans Tony Castaño, Fermín Guerra, and Roberto Ortiz. Cuban umpires called the games.¹¹⁰

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CHAPTER FOUR

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