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"La mujercita intervino": Foundational Nonfiction during the *Intervención Americana*

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While the anecdote is well-known to historians, literary and cultural studies scholars have paid scant attention to the story of María Teresa Arruebarrena, a creole woman who participated in the Harvard Summer School for Cuban Teachers in 1900, and Alexis Everett Frye, the U.S. Military Government's first Superintendent of Public Instruction on the occupied island.[1] A post-nuptial interview with Frye in the *Boston Globe*, later reprinted in the February 19-20, 1901 edition of the Cuban periodical *La lucha*, recounts the couple's politicized courtship. Frye requested Arruebarrena's hand in a telegram, asking "I know you are an antiannexationist, but I want very much to annex a small part of Cuba. What do you say?" The paper reports that the teacher telegraphed in reply "I cannot be annexed, but I would accept a mild form of protectorate" ("Blames Gen. Wood").

In this private exchange that the public official, as though realizing its emblematic importance, has shared with readers in both the U.S. and Cuba, Arruebarrena's body—racialized, like all Latin American bodies, by North American

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imperial discourse—becomes an erotic metonymy for the Cuban nation ("a small part of Cuba") as both parties debate the circumstances under and the extent to which the Latin object of desire will be joined to and penetrated by Anglo-Saxon imperial forces. At first glance, the anecdote conforms to the rules of the nineteenth-century literary genre that theorist Doris Sommer has dubbed the "foundational romance," in which heterosexual coupling serves as a nation-building allegory. Sommer argues that, in nineteenth-century Latin American texts such as the Argentine José Mármol's (1851) *Amalia*, José de Alencar's (1857) *Guarany*, the Ecuadoran Juan León Mera's (1877) *Cumandá,* or the Uruguayan Juan Zorrilla de San Martín's (1888) *Tabaré*, representatives of opposing political, regional, and racial factions are brought together romantically such that their potential marriages serve as "a figure for apparently nonviolent consolidation during [the] internecine conflicts" that bedeviled early nation-state formation in the region (6). She cites Cirilo Villaverde's (1882) *Cecilia Valdés, o, la Loma del Ángel*, in which the Spanish colonial patriarch(y) represents simultaneously the conditions of possibility for and the cause for prohibitions against the union of interracial half siblings Leonardo Gamboa and Cecilia Valdés, as a Cuban example of the genre.[2]

Yet, while it is tempting to read the Frye-Arruebarrena courtship as a real-life foundational romance, one cannot help but wonder what nation the Cuban creole and the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant North American—an international couple living in an imperial context—will found.[3] The *Boston Globe* article in which Frye is interviewed gestures at this seeming impasse by acknowledging the specter of possible Cuban annexation to the United States that haunts the couple's relationship. The fact that both partners verbally disavow the political domination that their marriage would appear to allegorize only serves to make matters more complicated.

Perhaps the questions that the Frye-Arruebarrena transnational foundation romance begs prove so difficult to answer because they look beyond the traditional purview of nineteenth-century Latin American literary studies. After all, though Latin American Studies constitutes itself as a transnational field of inquiry, scholarship on nineteenth-century literature tends to read the "largo y polisémico siglo [. . .] desde el debate sobre la construcción y modernización de las naciones" (Peluffo 2). Iberoamericana/Vervuert's "Juego de dados: Latinoamérica y su cultura en el siglo

[2] On *Cecilia Valdés* and colonial patriarchy, see Kutzinski.

[3] Frye was descended on both sides from passengers on the *Mayflower*. For a discussion of his ancestry, see Beattie.

XIX" is a case in point; of the eleven excellent books published in the series as of March 2021, seven mention specific countries in their titles ("Juego").[4] This national focus may be the natural result of the centrality of nation-state construction to the intellectual history of the region during the 1800s, a topic that Beatriz González-Stephan discusses in her canonical *Historiografía literaria del liberalismo hispanoamericano del siglo XIX*. Indeed, as Juan Poblete points out, governments during the period would self-consciously harness literature to the national project, as "a partir de la independencia los estados poscoloniales y los grupos de élite que los lideraban […] intentan reposicionar la literatura (y, en general, la producción de discursos) al interior de la forma discursiva nacional" (67-68).[5]

Yet, as William Acree has lamented recently, this "long-standing emphasis on the nation" has "hindered" meaningful scholarly exploration of the transnational "movement of ideas, cultural goods, and practices, along with their sources of influence, as well as on the people who mediated between one cultural context and others" (437). After all, as Alejandro Mejías-López has noted, the nation-state model was not hegemonic internationally during the nineteenth century, in which much of the planet belonged either formally or informally to one empire or another. While the Americas seem to have been a bulwark of republicanism during the 1800s, Latin American liberal politics—and poetics—were shaped by the demands of transnational capital, as recent research by Erika Beckman has made clear. Innumerable historians have shown that these financial dealings would lead to a second wave of Northern imperialism by Britain, France, and the United States after the original Iberian colonizers had returned to the metropoles. How, then, do transnational considerations intersect with (or even interrupt) the nation-building narrative of nineteenth-century Latin American literary studies?

In asking this question, I am building on work in the emerging field of nineteenth-century U.S. Latino studies undertaken by scholars such as Kirsten Silva Gruesz, Debra Castillo, Rodrigo Lazo, and Jesse Alemán (to cite only a handful of prominent examples). The case of the Harvard Summer School for Cuban Teachers and the marriage of Arruebarrena and Frye to which it led represents a theoretically rich field on which to explore the relations between nation-building and transnational (in

[4] Of the remaining four, two are single-author studies and two are edited volumes.

[5] Critical studies of Spanish American *modernismo* represent an important exception to the nation-centrism that I am describing here. For a broad and comparative overview of the relationship between nation-building and narrative, see Bhabha, ed. For a recent critique of the national focus of nineteenth-century Latin American studies, see Acree.

this case, imperial) constructs implicit in the Latin American presence in the nineteenth-century United States that these authors study. On the one hand, Arruebarrena's marriage to Frye replicates many of the structures of the "foundational romance" genre, the *sine qua non* of nationalist literature that explains how disparate elements are brought together to give birth to the nation. On the other, set against the backdrop of U.S. military, political, economic, and ideological colonization of Cuba, the marriage does not take place solely within a national context. Rather, it is emblematic of the semiotic reordering of the Cuban public sphere during the first U.S. occupation of the island. As historian Marial Iglesias Utset explains in *Las metáforas del cambio en la vida cotidiana: Cuba 1898-1902*, the period represented "una confusa etapa en la que sobre el trasfondo del vacío simbólico provocado por el cese de los más de cuatrocientos años de dominación colonial española emergen, a la par, exaltadas corrientes de patriotismo nacionalista y contradictorios procesos de americanización de las instituciones y las costumbres" (14). Performing national and colonial identities on this contested stage, the ambiguous symbols of the period would be harnessed to signify the bewildering array of "cosmopolitan, transnational, and (post)colonial perspectives" that existed "within the parameters of nation-building discourse" (Turpin 14-15).

Thus, in its allegorization of the alliance between the U.S. empire and the creole elite—an international arrangement that, as I will explain, proved complicated due to North Americans' racialized views of the Cubans whom they colonized, much to the chagrin of white members of the island's ruling classes—, Frye and Arruebarrena's relationship subverts the nationalist genre of the foundational romance through a transnational marriage. In this parodic fashion, it exposes the racial and gender tensions and paradoxes—metaphorical and material—that underlaid both Cuban nationalism and U.S. imperialism at the turn of the nineteenth century. Hybridizing the narrative and performative dimensions of nationalism in a transnational context, the marriage serves as a real-life (anti)imperial allegory in which the question of Cuban sovereignty is negotiated through control over the creole Arruebarrena's body. In this way, the events described here exceed the limits of both the national and the literary as categories of analysis, asking us to contemplate the limits and possibilities of reading the Fryes' marriage in terms of (trans)national allegory.

Education and Imperial Citizenship during the Intervención Americana

Cuba did not declare independence from Madrid along with the colonies of the Spanish Main in the 1820s, largely due to concerns regarding the future of the slave

economy in an independent state. Instead, the island would undergo a long struggle to separate from the Spanish Empire. The rebel government during the Ten Years' War against Spain (1868-78) made some allowances for emancipation, though full abolition would wait until 1886.[6] The decisive War for Cuban Independence began in 1895 in a climate of official U.S. neutrality. However, following the unexplained explosion of the *USS Maine* in Havana harbor on February 15, 1898, and a propaganda campaign in the popular press in which gross racial caricatures of Cubans and Spaniards played no small part, Washington yielded to the calls of hawks and declared war against Madrid.[7] While the Teller Amendment to President William McKinley's formal Declaration of War guaranteed that the U.S. would not attempt to exert military or political authority over a post-Spanish Cuba, the 1898 Treaty of Paris that ended the conflict transferred control of the island, along with Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Guam from Spain to the United States. The Northern country would occupy Cuba for the next four years, a period known in Spanish as the *intervención americana*. Though the U.S. military would withdraw from the island in 1902, Cuba remained the Northern country's protectorate until 1934.[8]

According to Iglesias Utset, this shift from Spanish to U.S. hegemony on the island "generó un proceso de profunda reflexión sobre las bases mismas de la cultura nacional, de singular importancia para el devenir posterior de la nación en la era republicana", which "afectó toda la simbología de la existencia cotidiana e hizo resurgir la dimensión política de las prácticas simbólicas, inclusive de las más ordinarias". This would give rise to a semiotic context in which:

> las representaciones de los discursos del nacionalismo, las arraigadas ideas vinculadas al legado colonial español y las nociones relacionadas con la presencia norteamericana, se manifiestan mediante diferentes sistemas de signos (imágenes, gestos, inscripciones, rituales) que a veces se mezclan y entrecruzan de manera amigable, y a veces se alinean en campos contendientes, enzarzados en batallas en las que se deciden los derroteros de la hegemonía cultural en la isla. (15)

Among the signs dueling on this semantic battlefield were those relating to race, as the events of 1898 had brought two very different racial taxonomies into conflict with one

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[6] The Ten Years' War ended with the 1878 Pacto de Zanjón. It was followed by the Guerra Chiquita (1879-1880). On the history of Cuban slavery, see Moreno Fraginals and Knight. On the long and complex history of Cuban abolition, see Scott. For a recent reconsideration of the relationship between slavery and Cuba's prolonged colonial status, see Ferrer.

[7] For examples of political cartoons on Cuba during the period, see Charnon-Deutsch.

[8] For a comprehensive history of the war, see Foner and Pérez, *Between*. For an overview of historiography on the war, see Pérez, *War*.

another, with North Americans seizing on the mixed-race background of much of the Cuban population—including, in their eyes, colonial elites who saw themselves as white—in order to justify an imperial presence on the island.

Inhabitants of a former Spanish colony possessing a racially suspect population that had never known self-government, Cubans were thought of by the U.S. occupiers—and sometimes by their own elites—as backwards subalterns needing Anglo-Saxon guidance in republican virtue through civics education.[9] As educational reformer and future head of public schools Esteban Borrero Echeverría noted at a Cuban school ceremony, "vosotros, vuestros padres y antecesores, por espacio de centenares de años, habíais sido súbditos del Rey de España. […] Las leyes se hacían en España, por peninsulares, para vosotros, y era vuestro deber obedecerlas. Fuisteis tratandosde [*sic*] un modo impío y torpe; vuestras riquezas se enviaban á España y el país en último extremo se veía obligado á someterse á esa suerte de esclavitud ó á pelear para libertarse de ella."[10] Here, the educational administrator likens the lack of democratic culture in Spain's former colony to "slavery," a turn of phrase that cannot be accidental in a country whose independence process, as I explained above, was tied to the abolition of a system of African chattel bondage upheld by the metropole. This metaphorical use of slavery condemns Spain's denial of political sovereignty to Cuba at the same time that it questions the capacity of the island's racialized popular classes for full citizenship. Delivering his words in a speech at a school, Borrerro Echeverría points to public education as the means to train the masses for citizenship.

More imperialistic in orientation, the U.S. Military Government under Leonard Wood, too, was interested in developing citizen agency among Cuban youth. Given that the Teller Amendment had ruled out the possibility of "coerced annexation" (Otheguy 212), the Wood administration hoped that students in the country's rapidly expanding school system could be mobilized to "influence their parents to call for the annexation of Cuba by the U.S.," a process known as "annexation through acclamation" (Minichino 225). In this way, Wood wished to use "la escuela como lugar de difusión de los valores estadounidenses y bloque[ar] así el desarrollo de una cultura

[9] Otheguy stresses that Afro-Cuban educational movements were underway during the colonial and war periods.

[10] Entitled "Organización de la Ciudad Escolar de los Alumnos," the document is printed on letterhead from the Secretaría de Instrucción Pública and appears to be the speech for an opening ceremony or a student initiation. No date is given, but mention is of made of the Military Government (1898-1902). I have conserved the original spelling when citing nineteenth- and early-twentieth archival documents in this article.

nacional autónoma y potencialmente rival" (Fattacciu 64). Much as, on the U.S. mainland, schools had been deployed throughout the nineteenth century to assimilate natives, freedmen, and immigrants to North American cultural and political values (González Lucerna), the Occupation Government considered public education "an unparalleled opportunity through which to promote in Cuba the attitudes and values compatible with larger American objectives." Schools thus were deployed to urge the country's young people to "abandon traditional values" considered incompatible with republican citizenship and "acquire new habits" (Pérez, "Imperial Design" 7). In its imperial zeal, the U.S. Military Government dedicated as much as one fourth of its budget to education (Foner: II 459), leading to a fivefold increase in the number of students over the late colonial period (Varona 23).[11]

Such precipitous growth proved too much for the island's already insufficient teaching force, which, in 1898, had numbered a mere 800 (Varona 23).[12] While other Latin American countries had responded to similar scarcities in school personnel by importing foreign teachers, Cubans rejected the overt imperialism of this strategy, insisting that schools be staffed by native-born educators (Iglesias Utset 129).[13] While pedagogues such as Guillermo López insisted on the construction of normal schools "para que los maestros actuales y aspirantes al magisterio tengan una enseñanza regularizada que les habilite académicamente al ejercicio de su profesión", the Intervention-era government elaborated plans to "Americanize the teachers" (Pérez, "Imperial Design" 12) by sending as many as 3,000 of them to the U.S. for continuing education (15). It was hoped that, upon their return, the teachers would use their newly acquired understandings to fortify the country's deficient educational system and preserve the nation from the supposed barbarism of the racialized popular classes—the "esclavitud" to which Borrerro Echeverría had alluded.[14] Yet, even as creole elites willingly participated in the racial-colonial project of sending the teachers to the United States, the threat to Cuban sovereignty that the program implied could not have been far from their minds; tellingly, the ships conveying the Cuban teachers to Harvard were

[11] For a more generous reading of Wood's assimilationist education policy, see Epstein. For more on Cuban education during this period, in addition to the sources cited here, see Lucero.

[12] For more on the history of education in colonial Cuba, in addition to the sources cited here, see Huerta Martínez and Curnow.

[13] The most well-known nineteenth-century Latin American project to import U.S. teachers is the Argentine *maestras de Sarmiento* program. See Luigi, Genova, and Leroux for more information.

[14] For a theoretical discussion of education and U.S. imperialism in Latin America, see Puiggrós.

outfitted by the U.S. army (Fattacciu 62). This tension between "los esfuerzos de asimilación presentes en el proyecto de reforma del sistema educativo y el deseo de hacer propio el modelo de modernidad estadounidense domina toda la experiencia de la Escuela de Verano en Harvard", as the case of Arruebarrena's acceptance of a "mild form of protectorate" makes clear (Fattaciu 76).

Harvard

The Cuban teachers program included many U.S. institutions of higher learning, the most famous of which was Harvard University, whose Summer School for Cuban Teachers provided a stage on which to perform the racialized and gendered allegories of imperialism that underlaid U.S.-Cuban relations at the time. In the summer of 1900, the New England school hosted almost half of Cuba's teaching force (González Lucerna): 1,237 individuals, a group that included representatives from almost every municipality on the island (Iglesias Utset 131). While the Bostonian university—unlike, for example, the State Normal School at New Paltz, New York, which operated a successful year-long program for Cuban teachers—had no formal teacher-training program (González Lucerna), it offered other advantages.[15] Both Wood and Alexis Frye, superintendent of schools in occupied Cuba, were Harvard graduates (González Lucerna), making the university an obvious choice for the flagship Cuban teachers program. Moreover, the institution was located in what Borrero Echeverría had called "el Atenas de América", the Massachusetts capital where, he claimed, public education "had been born" (Borradores) and whose universities were thought to have served as the intellectual motors of U.S. industrial expansion (González Lucerna).[16]

At first glance, then, the Summer School for Cuban Teachers appears to be an organic-intellectual arm of the pro-annexation Interventionist government ruling in Havana. In addition to six lectures a week on the teaching of civics—a subject of great interest to both the Interventionist forces and the creole upper classes—the Cuban

[15] An early employer of Wilson Gill's "school city" model, the State Normal School at New Paltz was a pioneer in civics education (Lang and Klotzberger). For a primary source on the New Paltz program for Cuban teachers, see *The Normal Review*. For a critical study, see Genova, *Imperial*.

[16] Poetic though Borrero Echeverría's musings may be, modern public education in fact originated in Prussia. It also is noteworthy that his comments on the "Athens of the Americas" represent a departure from the Arielist discourse then current in Spanish American *modernista* thought, which posited the creole aristocracies of Latin America—and not the North American bourgeoisie—as the New World heirs of classical civilization.

teachers at Harvard received three weekly lectures on the somewhat more obviously imperial topic of English-language teaching methodology (Minichino 299) and were even welcomed by President McKinley in a reception at the White House (Root qtd. in *Álbum* n.pag.). As Frye and Ernest Conant, the Havana-based U.S. lawyer who first thought to send Cuban educators to Harvard, explained on February 6, 1900 in their initial query to Harvard President Charles Eliot, the teachers "will have for their object hard study, as well as a tour of observation through our country" (*Álbum* n.pag.) The letter urges Eliot to consider "what tremendous results will follow, with one thousand intelligent men or women (after such a broadening experience) scattered over the Island," carrying North American culture "back into the Cuban homes and the Cuban schools" (*Álbum* n.pag.).

Eliot eagerly embraced Conant and Frye's model of acculturation through education. Though the Harvard president recognized that a people should "acquire" their democratic "inspirations" "on their own," he hoped to encourage the Cubans to do this by presenting them with the "oportunidad de ver y estudiar los nuevos métodos" for the teaching of civics then being developed in the United States (qtd. in Cuban Summer School 4).[17] Having previously formed part of an 1893 committee advocating for the further inclusion of citizen education in U.S. public schools (Minichino 69), the Harvard president endorsed the summer school as a place where Cuban teachers could see with their own eyes "las instituciones que forman la vida del Estado" so that they later could share with "sus conciudadanos lo que hayan visto y les haya sugerido su experiencia propia para la educación de sus propios conciudadanos" (qtd. in Cuban Summer School 5). These efforts appear to have proven successful. "Interviewed after a month in Cambridge, Cubans asserted that the greatest lessons the United States had to offer were its government and general height of culture" (Pérez, "Imperial Design" 13).

In this context of acculturation, "soft imperialism" at the service of annexation would take on a performative quality, as can be seen in the *Escuela de verano para los maestros cubanos*, a book published by the Cuban Summer School to document the project. The work makes unironic reference to "nuestra amiga la Union [*sic*] Americana" (Cuban Summer School 8) and speaks fondly of "las relaciones que se han establecido" between Cubans and North Americans at Cambridge, which "son tan cordiales y

[17] The words appear in Spanish in *La escuela de verano para los maestros cubanos*. I presume that Eliot originally wrote them in English, though no translator is listed. I have not found the original. On the pedagogical methods taught at the Summer School, see Fattacciu 63-4.

afectuosas que parecen ser de fecha antigua y entre familias enlazadas con algun [*sic*] parentesco." The text expresses surprise at this affinity that the Latin Cubans hold for the Anglo-Saxons of greater Boston, as "no ha sucedido así con las Repúblicas que hablan nuestra lengua y que nos igualan en el modo de vivir y en las costumbres" (45). This rhetoric of family relations appears to have extended beyond the pages of the *Escuela de verano*; tellingly, a Bostonian couple offered to adopt one of the Cuban teachers (Fattacciu 74). At a moment in which U.S. intervention in the Caribbean had prompted cautious murmurings about Yankee imperialism from thinkers as ideologically diverse as the Cuban José Martí, the Uruguayan Enrique José Rodó, and the Brazilian Eduardo Prado, these affirmations of Cuban affinity with the United States cannot be read as apolitical. Rather, the near "parentesco" between North Americans and Cubans functions as a transnational political allegory naturalizing the protectorate status that Cuba, with the half-hearted blessing of many of its elites, was assuming at the period. As I will explain below, in the case of Frye and Arruebarrena, this familial trope would become the locus of transnational power brokering.

Racialization and Exoticization

However, at the same time that the Harvard project enacted the discursive assimilation of Cuba to the U.S. national family, it also marked the colonial difference between Cubans and North Americans in racial terms. Even as the discourse around the Cuban teachers stressed the "familial" relationship between the two peoples, the racialized differences between the groups were never far from the Harvard administrators' minds. At first glance, Harvard, which had graduated its first Afro-descended students in 1869 (Harvard College Library), was less overtly discriminatory in its admittance of racialized Cubans than institutions such as University of Missouri, which explicitly stated that "the offer [of admission] is not extended to the Cubans that may be Negroes"' (qtd. in Foner: II 464). Yet, the Boston institution's decision was not without controversy. Not only did the presence of Afro-Cuban students in the expedition represent a logistical challenge for housing, but Eliot found it necessary to hold a meeting at the Cambridge Congregational Club to address public concerns regarding the Cubans' racial identity (González Lucerna).

Importantly, while "no hay documentos que atestigüen con precisión la composición racial de la expedición cubana", the Cubans studying at Harvard appear to have been overwhelmingly of European origin (Fattacciu 66). This makes sense, as the island's teaching force at the time was predominantly white (68). "Además durante

la ocupación norteamericana, los fines asimilacionistas de la reforma escolar habían determinado que los docentes fueran seleccionados entre las personas pertenecientes a la clase alta" such as María Teresa Arruebarrena, as I will explain. This means that Cuban teachers "fueran casi todos blancos educados en los Estados Unidos según los métodos pedagógicos estadounidenses" (67).[18] According to Frye, only ten of the 1,237 teachers were of partial African descent (González Lucerna). While the photographs included in the *Escuela de verano* and the *Álbum de la expedición de los maestros cubanos a la Universidad de Harvard* (a sort of yearbook of the summer school) suggest that the true number of Afro-Cubans may have been slightly higher, whites still represented a large majority of the group, with light-skinned *mulatos* constituting a small minority.[19] Yet, despite these demographics, the Harvard administrators in their writings racialized the teachers by foregrounding "physical, phenotypical descriptions of Hispanic difference" (Havard, *Hispanism* 6). The 1899 *Annual Report to the President and Treasurer of Harvard College* describes the Cubans' departures from Anglo-Saxon somatic norms in detail:

> The physique of the visitors necessarily attracted the immediate attention of those who were responsible for their welfare. […] It was obvious at first sight that the Cuban men were decidedly shorter than the American men; and Dr. Sargent subsequently confirmed this general observation by measuring 479 of the Cuban men. He found that the medium height of the Cuban male teachers was 64.3 inches—a height surpassed by ninety per cent. of American male students. The Cuban women were also decidedly shorter than American women; thus, only twenty per cent. of the Cuban women attained a stature of 62.2 inches—a stature which is surpassed by fifty per cent. of American women students. As to weight, although the Cuban teachers were older than American students, more than ninety per cent. of American male students surpass in weight the 114 pounds attained by only fifty per cent. of the Cuban teachers. The medium weight of the American female student is 114.6 pounds, and the medium weight of the Cuban female teacher was 102 pounds. Eighty per cent. of American female students surpass the medium weight of the Cuban female teachers. (Harvard 45)

In the case of the Cuban women, this racialization would take on sexual overtones. The *Escuela de verano* jokes that "el Presidente Sr. Eliot fué uno de los hombres más felices del pais el dia [*sic*] que arribó el primer transporte con los Cubanos, pero mucho más feliz cuando arribaron los hermosas [*sic*] é inteligentes maestras Cubanas" (Cuban Summer School 46). If the Cubans speak of "nuestra amiga, la Union

[18] Otheguy notes that, upon the withdrawal of U.S. troops in 1902, 96 percent of Cuban teachers were white (242-3).

[19] It is important to point out, however, that some Afro-Cubans did number among the teachers sent to the United States to study pedagogy. Consuelo Anacleta Serra Heredia, daughter of Afro-Cuban leader Rafael Serra, for example, graduated from the New York Normal College in 1905 (Mirabal 154).

Americana", it seems that Eliot wants to be more than friends as, in this rendering of events, he indulges the common Northern ethno-racial and gender stereotype of hypersexual "Latina" women.[20] He was hardly alone in this view; in 1904, Secretary of War Elihu Root claimed that some teachers were the mulata mistresses of local Cuban officials (González Lucerna).

Paradoxically, at the same time that they eroticize the Cuban women in racial terms, the architects of the Harvard project also demonstrate a respect for what they identify as the more stringent aspects of nineteenth-century Hispanic sexual mores. Frye initially had objected to the project on the grounds that the country's "social traditions" would render the participation of female teachers difficult (qtd. in *Álbum* n.pag.). These fears were not unfounded.

> Varios artículos en la prensa periódica condenaron el proyecto por razones de índole nacionalista; una parte de la opinión pública adujo la imposibilidad de que las muchachas jóvenes que en su tierra apenas si salían solas a la calle, hicieran un viaje de muchas millas a un país extraño sin acompañamiento familiar y en una convivencia estrecha con otros hombres desconocidos, que podría representar una amenaza para su integridad moral. (Iglesias Utset 131)

Perhaps as a concession to Cuban customs, Harvard hired thirty bilingual chaperones to look after the female teachers (González Lucerna). Meanwhile, in accordance with traditional Hispanic notions of propriety, Cuban men and women were kept separate in housing, dining, and academic facilities at Harvard, even as the Cuban males were allowed to mix socially with North American females during their stay in Cambridge (*Annual Report* 40-1). Bearing witness to this practice, the *Álbum* carefully includes two pictures, "las maestras están comiendo" and "los maestros están comiendo" to typify the separation of the sexes (*Álbum* n.p.).

The white men of the University administration thus felt compelled to save the exoticized brown *cubanas* from these Hispanic colonial patriarchal practices, which they deemed antithetical to modern bourgeois values.[21] Even as they expressed fascination with the separation of sexes in traditional Cuban society, the authors of the *Annual Report* were careful to note that it inefficiently cost twice as much to house Cuban women in private homes as it did to house the Cuban men in the college's dormitories (Harvard 48). Relegated to what to the New Englanders must have seemed harem-like conditions during their time in the U.S., the Cuban teachers were read by the Harvard

[20] For discussions of the representation of Hispanicity in the late-nineteenth century United States, see de Guzmán and Havard, *Hispanism*.

[21] On the discourse of chivalry in Spanish-Cuban-American War propaganda, see Hoganson.

administration as Latin American variations on the racialized *femmes voilées* [veiled women] of the nineteenth-century European colonial-erotic imaginary. The popular press of the period also engaged this exoticizing discourse. One article notes that "President Eliot expressed a strong hope that the voyage of the Cuban teachers would result in personal freedom for the Cuban women" by "helping to break down the Moorish traditions which for five centuries subjected Spanish women to almost slavish obedience to a humiliating social custom" ("Wedding" 5). As Frantz Fanon explains in "L'Algérie se dévoile," his classic critique of the sort of Orientalist discourse that I am describing, alluringly mysterious, the cloistered Cuban *maestras* would incite masculine desire to unveil the dark features that have been hidden behind inscrutable foreign customs and penetrate the Southern other with Northern imperial eyes—not coincidentally, at the same time that U.S. influence was penetrating Cuban political and economic life more and more deeply.[22]

Part of this erotically charged racial project of saving Cuban women from socially regressive Hispanic practices through pedagogy entailed introducing the teachers to North American standards of feminine comport, which charged women to "speak against vice and thus exercise moral suasion, particularly in their primary role as moral educators of their children"—functions for which Cuban women had been deemed by North American imperial forces as racially incapable, as the need to train teachers in Anglo-American notions of civics demonstrates (Havard, "Mary Mann" 148). The authors of the *Escuela de verano* argue that, through their New England contacts, the *cubanas* were to learn that, unlike women on the island, in which the Spanish-colonial tradition still weighed heavily, "la muchacha Americana aprende á cuidarse y conducirse en sociedad, en el paseo, en la calle y en todos los lugares, desde que aún es niña y nadié [*sic*] podrá decir de ella ni imputarle accion [*sic*] alguna reprobable ni nadie puede guardarla ni querer su bien más que ella misma". Importantly,

> Las damas Cubanas se han entusiasmado tanto con este modo de ser, propio y natural que la mayoría de ellas son vistas en todas partes, ya en el paseo, ya visitando los museos, las bibliotecas, los colegios, ya asistiendo á los teatros y todas se proponen continuar haciéndolo así en Cuba, pues han comprendido perfectamente que solo así podrán seguir adelante en su empresa y trabajo cotidiano por la existencia sin estar sujeta al capricho de los hombres y de una sociedad que hasta ahora solo les ha exigido deberes y ningun [*sic*] derecho les ha concedido. (Cuban Summer School 95)

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[22] For an overview of racialized and gendered representations of Cuba in the U.S. public sphere during this period, see Pérez, *Cuba in the American Imagination*. On "Orientalism" and imperialism in Western literatures, see Said. On the "imperial eye," see Pratt.

Interacting with independent North American women under the covetously watchful eyes of North American men, Cuban maestras such as María Teresa Arruebarrena come to understand themselves as autonomous individuals free to circulate through the world and form their own ideas beyond the constraints of the harems to which Spanish colonial society supposedly had confined them. No longer "subject" to patriarchal authority (be it that of their husbands and fathers or that of the Spanish colonial Captain General), they were now citizen-subjects in their own right, possessing rights—even if those rights were circumscribed by the neocolonial limits embodied by the masculine-imperial gaze of the very Harvard administrators schooling them in their new-found citizenship.

North American women, for their part, participated actively in this gendered imperial project of citizen education for their racialized Cuban counterparts. Frye reports that a "multitud de señoras americanas, de lo más selecto de mi pueblo, han levantado fondos para organizar hermosas fiestas para entretener á las maestras cubanas" ("Con Mr. Frye" 71). Somewhat more practical, "la asociación de mujeres del Estado de Massachusetts conocida con el nombre de 'Women Clubs' [*sic*] ha organizado una reunión (meeting) á la que asistieron innumerables maestras Cubanas, con el objéto [*sic*] de darles á conocer sus estatutos, á fin de que una vez en Cuba sean establecidos alli para mejorar la cultura, si cabe, entre las familias Cubanas" (Cuban Summer School 57).[23] One imagines that it was not lost on the Cubans that the Massachusetts Women's Club was presenting its statutes as a blueprint for democratic civic organization on the island at the same time that the Military Government was presenting the U.S. founding document as a model of "mediated" republican rule to the occupied island's Constitutional Assembly.[24] Paradoxes such as this one are central to the marriage of Arruebarrena and Frye, to which I now turn.

Foundational Nonfiction: María Teresa Arruebarrena and Alexis Everett Frye

The following two sections explain how Frye and Arruebarrena's transnational relationship functions as a parody of both the national romances of Latin America and the U.S. imperial discourses described above by enacting a "critical, oppositional performance" that "self-reflexively intersects national and counter-national perspectives" (Turpin 184). I use "parody" in the etymological sense of the term, a

[23] English in the original.

[24] Cuban historians refer to the protectorate state inaugurated in Cuba after the formal end of U.S. occupation as "la república mediatizada".

"counter song" that resemanticizes the original through imitation or inversion. On the one hand, the marriage of Frye and Arruebarrena subverts Cuban nationalism by rescripting the foundational romance genre of Latin American literature as U.S. imperial allegory. On the other, however, by insisting on the creole Arruebarrena's agency in the proceedings, the Fryes' relationship undermines the racial and gender paradigms upon which U.S. imperialism is based. Refusing to come to a hermeneutically neat resolution, the parodic narrative of Frye and Arruebarrena's marriage gives "voice to the cosmopolitan, transnational, and colonial perspectives that [foundational] allegory must quash if it is to articulate a sense of national cohesion" (Turpin 4-5). In particular, it forces a consideration of the tensions between the national and the imperial that categorized the geopolitical situation in much of the Americas at the turn of the nineteenth century.

Much of the power of the Fryes' marriage to function as a parodic counterdiscourse to the nationalist and imperialist contexts in which it is situated hinges on Arruebarrena's role in the events. While one might presume that the creole would find herself alienated by the ironic haggling over whether her marriage would represent "annexation" or a "protectorate" that I discussed at the beginning of this article, she in fact manages to participate actively from the margins to which imperial eyes have pushed her. The newspaper notes that "Mrs. Frye was born and brought up under Catholic associations and, as Mr. Frye is Protestant, the friendly Bishop of Havana could not sanction the marriage ceremony in the Church unless the bridegroom made certain promises for the future. These he was unwilling to make." While Hispanic and Anglo-Saxon patriarchs haggled over how to divide the "small piece" between themselves, in the words of the article, "the little woman interfered." Arruebarrena informed the Bishop and Frye that "she did not intend her husband to make any promise for her sake that would not be kept and would rather have a civil marriage […] just as many a woman in her husband's country."

At first glance, this incident appears as an allegory of Cuba's acquiescence to Northern imperial power. Arruebarrena's decision to break with Hispano-Catholic norms and accept a civil marriage "just as many a woman in her husband's country" clearly emblematizes Cuba's gradual cultural and political absorption by the United States. In this way, the story of Frye and Arruebarrena's relationship functions as a foundational romance of U.S.-Cuban union. Yet, even though, like the Latin American literary genre, the Arruebarrena-Frye romance "invested private passions with public purpose" (Sommer 7) to forge "an allegorical relationship between personal and

political narratives" (41), as I noted above, that parallel no longer serves to justify the nation, but rather to legitimize the empire. While traditional foundational novels such as Villaverde's *Cecilia Valdés* probe the possibility of interracial union bringing about a sovereign Cuban nation, in the story of Frye and Arruebarrena, a Cuban creole marries an Anglo-American elite as a reflection of the island's "acceptance" of "a mild form of protectorate," replacing national foundation with imperial consolidation as the resolution towards which the narrative tends. If, in traditional foundational narratives, "the creoles had at least to establish conjugal and then paternity rights, making a *generative* rather than a *genealogical* claim" by winning "America's heart and body so that the fathers could found her and reproduce themselves as cultivated men" (Sommer 15), in the story of Frye and Arruebarrena, the Anglo-American man performs the role traditionally ascribed by the foundational genre to creole patriarchs. The creole woman, meanwhile, inhabits the space often occupied in Latin American national novels by female subalterns such as Villaverde's Cecilia Valdés. By narrativizing U.S. domination of Cuba through a structure typically associated with Latin American nationalism, the Frye-Arruebarrena marriage could be said to present U.S. imperialism as a logical and desirable outcome of the island's independence struggle.

According to this interpretation, like Arruebarrena, the emancipated Cuban nation has been wooed and conquered by North Americans. A December 31, 1900 article in the *New York Daily Tribune* indulges in this reading of foundational imperial romance as a form of "annexation through acclamation," noting that "many were the wishes expressed by the Cuban teachers that the little romance of the summer might result in Mr. Frye uniting himself more closely with the interests of Cuba." The same article states that popular desire for the marriage was such that the wedding will represent "the greatest social function Cuba has known in twenty years." The imperial connotations of this discourse are transparent: "the first American holding an official position in Cuba to win and wed a Cuban woman," Frye apparently is beloved not only by Arruebarrena, but "love[d] and esteem[ed]" by the Cuban people as a whole and "his recent tour through the island when he inspected the schools of Cuba, was like a tour of a king or a former Captain-General of the island" ("Wedding" 5). Replacing Villaverde's Leonardo and Cecilia with Frye and Arruebarrena and casting the North American discursively as the heir to Spanish-colonial patriarchy on the island, the article represents the Frye-Arruebarrena marriage as the foundational moment of a new era of imperialism in Cuba.

The Fryes' imperial marriage performs this parodic subversion of the Cuban nationalist narrative on the wide stage provided by nineteenth-century print culture, in which the separation of genres was not observed as strictly as it would be in later periods. By fitting factual events into the literary structure of the foundational romance, the anonymous reporters writing about Frye and Arruebarrena participate in the "new journalism" of the late 1800s. Characterized by "the intentional use of 'literary' technique," periodical texts of this period featured "the strong characterization, the plot motifs, the symbols, the language, the description, and the […] genre conventions" that marked the popular novels of the era (Roggenkamp 17). To blur the generic borders further, news items and imaginative literature often shared physical space. In the nineteenth century, "el género de los periódicos fue […] un híbrido tanto a nivel formal como semántico" (Poblete 152) that incorporated "discursos que habían siempre pertenecido a esferas y a sectores nítidamente separados: ensayos, política, ficciones sentimentales e históricas masivas, almanaques, consejos, crónicas policiales, noticias de negocios, etc." (70). A "hybrid" form, newspapers during the 1800s routinely published novels in installments, and many of the foundational romances that Sommer analyzes originally appeared in serial form on the pages of nineteenth-century periodicals (Sommer 30). Thus, "in addition to sharing news items, print communities were being consolidated because everyone who read the paper was either laughing or (usually) panting and crying over the same installment of the serialized novel" (40). In this genre-crossing context, it is not difficult to understand how the factual story of Frye and Arruebarrena could have been emplotted—and received—as though it were a parodic foundational romance.[25]

Importantly, in nineteenth-century Latin America, newspapers and other texts often were performed orally for group audiences. In this way, the relatively low levels of literacy used to justify U.S. intervention in the Cuban educational infrastructure were "amplificados por múltiples formas de consumo cultural de los periódicos, formas que van mucho más allá del consumo en solitario, individual y silente en que solemos pensar" (Poblete 149). This allowed the discourses produced in newspapers to circulate among the popular classes inhabiting intellectual communities beyond the walls of the

[25] On "emplotment," or, the narrativization of factual history through the discursive structures of various literary genres, see White.

lettered city. Written "as much for the educated as for the illiterate" (Tinajero 15), newspapers "were the only publications that reached all social classes" (11).[26]

In nineteenth-century Cuba, this auditory "reading" often took place in cigar factories, which famously employed *lectores*, individuals hired to read literary and periodical texts aloud to tobacco rollers as they worked. The practice was so widespread that the founders of one paper, *La Aurora*, specifically took aural "legibility" into account when preparing their articles (Tinajero 24). In her study of *lectores*, Araceli Tinajero underscores the performative aspects of the cigar factory reader's function. She notes that, in addition to periodicals and prose fiction, stage plays often were read aloud in tabacco factories; "thus, we can deduce that the *lector* was forced to read and dramatize at the same time, since, otherwise, the reading would have been very difficult to understand" (41). This meant yet another blurring of genre boundaries, as newspapers were read aloud in the same forum in which dramatic texts were performed, often at another moment during the same workday. Acting out a text as he read it aloud, the lector would marry narrative to performance on the cigar factory floor, providing a space in which listeners could contemplate the "cosmopolitan, transnational, and colonial undercurrents of nation-building discourse" that the Frye-Arruebarrena marriage embodies (Turpin 25).

Doubtlessly familiar with the culture of cigar factories, backbone of the popular independence movement into which the U.S. had intervened, and aware that "to a great extent, the newspaper was a sort of battlefield of ideological and social struggles going on in colonial Cuba" (Tinajero 12), Frye and Arruebarrena would have realized that news of their marriage would be staged for tobacco workers in the manner that I have just described. The couple certainly seems to have been aware of the potential of their union to serve as a political symbol within a larger Intervention-era semiotic context emphasizing "la dimensión política de las prácticas simbólicas" (Iglesias Utset 15), as is made clear by the intentionally public nature of their marriage—which was announced in the *New York Times*, even though neither bride nor groom were from New York ("A.E. Frye"). Moreover, the telegram with Frye's awkward proposal was published in both North American and Cuban newspapers, suggesting that the participants were self-consciously performing an allegorical representation of Cuba's new place in the U.S. colonial order. While the couple allegedly wished "to have

[26] On the consumption of periodicals as a dialectic between the isolated individual and a geographically expansive public sphere, see Anderson 39. On the "lettered city" and Latin American nationalism as an elite intellectual construction, see Rama.

a quiet home wedding, […] the teachers would not listen to it." As "petitions began to pour in for a public wedding," Leonard Wood "kindly offered the use of the large public building at Mariano, a few miles west of Havana, and invitations were issued to all teachers and school officers of Cuba" ("Wedding" 5). A synecdoche of the geopolitical situation that made it possible (as Wood's involvement in procuring a government venue for the ceremony makes clear), the Fryes' wedding was attended by 2,000 people, including former participants in the Harvard program who were conveyed to Havana from the provinces on trains specially hired for the occasion (González Lucerna). This elaborate staging situates the nuptials as the climax of the Cuban Summer School narrative, positioning Frye and Arruebarrena as the foundational couple of a consolidated colonial configuration consisting of U.S. elites and Cuban creoles.

As though afraid of being too subtle, the Fryes named their first daughter Pearl Eliot (González Lucerna). If her first name references the "pearl of the Antilles," her middle name—the Harvard president's surname—fixes her as a member of the transnational "family" "born" of the Cuban teachers project and the colonialism that it represents. In this way, the Frye family history described here narratively naturalizes Cuba as a daughter of U.S. empire. Rather than two opposing nations existing in a relationship of imperial exploitation to one another, the United States and Cuba in this repurposed (trans)national romance are symbolically synthesized in the "character" of Pearl Eliot Frye.

Intervención cubana

Yet, even as it parodies Latin American foundational narratives in order to allegorize Cuban colonial absorption by U.S. empire, the Arruebarrena-Frye relationship performs a "counter song" to the racial-imperial romance of feminized Cuban passivity represented by the Harvard administrators' desire to "rescue" Cuban women from the shackles of Hispanic patriarchy. Arruebarrena does not follow the Orientalist script that the Harvard administrators have written for her by waiting for Anglo-Saxon cavaliers to deliver her from despotic Hispanic colonials. Instead—not unlike the female Algerian freedom fighters of Fanon's canonical essay, who alternate between Arab and European customs, strategically veiling and unveiling themselves in order to hide their revolutionary activities from colonial eyes—, she imitates the sort of feminine civic participation modeled by the Massachusetts Women's Club and "interferes" in the dispute between the Cuban and North American patriarchs. In contrast to the Cuban women bounded by tradition that one finds in the *Álbum* and

similar U.S. imperial artefacts, Arruebarrena asserts her citizen subjectivity and leverages her "relationship" with the United States in order to move the "small piece of Cuba" out of the Spanish colonial sphere and into something that she finds more agreeable (not direct colonization by the Hispanic tradition that the Bishop represents or formal annexation to Frye's United States, but "a mild form of protectorate").[27]

While contemporary scholars will be (justifiably) critical of this pro-protectorate attitude, I want to linger on Arruebarrena's concern for unkept promises by Frye, the United States' representative. The attempt to mediate in the conflict between Frye and the Bishop—or between Anglo-American modernity and Hispanic tradition—by partially adopting U.S. gender norms represents a creole-elite effort to exert agency in the transfer of the island from Spanish to U.S. colonial rule. Importantly, the U.S.'s very presence in Cuba testifies to the unfulfilled promise to respect Cuban autonomy represented by the Teller Amendment, which was disregarded in large part due to concerns about the island's racial readiness for self-government. This is made clear by the Spanish rendering of the words "the little woman interfered" in *La lucha*, the anti-American periodical in which a translation of the interview was published: "la mujercita intervino". Given the newspaper's open stance against U.S. imperialism, the choice of verbs in the Spanish-language text inevitably alludes to the *intervención americana*.[28] Here, however, it is not the *americanos* intervening in Cuba, but a Cuban intervening in the *americanos'* Intervention. Intended for Cuban consumption, the translated text suggests an alternate interpretation to the allegory of imperial assimilation to which the Fryes' marriage otherwise might point, one in which certain Cubans—the creoles from whose ranks Arruebarrena emerges—are able to broker a degree of influence over the colonizing power.

Frye would have been amenable to the sort of anti-annexationist intervention that I am suggesting here. In the interview from which I have been quoting, he displays sensitivity to Cuban concerns about "the supposed efforts to Americanize Cuba." As impassioned an anti-annexationist as his wife Arruebarrena, Frye was on record as stating that the Cuban middle class "have the making of a self-governing people" and the potential to form "one of the most quiet, stable republics on the globe"—claims that clearly contrast with the prevailing U.S. colonialist discourse of the time ("Blames Gen. Wood"). This belief in the island's capacity for self-government led him to present

[27] On the lived experiences of Cuban women during the early twentieth century, see Stoner.

[28] For more on the representation of U.S. imperialism in *La lucha*, see Rodríguez Díaz.

the teachers on the boat to Cambridge with a Cuban flag with which to salute their North American hosts upon arriving at port (de los Reyes y Galindo 140). Later, he had a bilingual version of the Cuban national anthem, "El himno de Bayamo", distributed to all public schoolchildren in the country, with a note asserting the island's right to independence (González Lucerna).[29] The administrator would go so far as to publish an open letter to the people of Cuba declaring that the island "is not now nor will ever be again a Colony" (qtd. in Minichino 223).

Borrero Echeverría, who had lectured his nation's schoolchildren on the political passivity promoted by the Spanish metropole and who would come to occupy Frye's seat in the Cuban government after the transition to Republican rule, would add racial notes to the counter song that the assertion of Cuban political agency through the seemingly imperialist transnational romance necessarily entails. In a January 4, 1901 letter later reprinted in *Patria*, he would write Arruebarrena:

> ¿Ve usted, señora? ...El esposo amante, que en el éxtasis feliz de la dicha cumplida y en el confiado abandono de un cariño consagrado ya solemnemente ante el mundo, pone á sus piés de usted nombre y fortuna, vino aquí no hace mucho, sin conocer siquiera nuestra lengua y, arrebatado de un fervor pedagógico, á conquistar para una alta civilización escolar las almas de los niños cubanos. Nuestra patria, por la magia de sus gracias de usted y por el atractivo de su exquisita distinción lo ha conquistado á él para el hogar cubano; encadenando así definitivamente su vida y su destino á la vida y el destino de nuestro país. Quiere el Cielo que por los mismos términos Cuba influya en el alma de la Gran Nación del Norte, y que las relaciones que al cabo establezca entre las dos naciones el destino sean, en sí mismas, y ante el mundo, tan nobles, tan dignas y tan bellas como las que unen las almas de ustedes en el nuevo hogar que, en la igualdad suprema del amor, vienen á encender á la sombra amorosa de nuestras palmas!

Much like the use of the term "esclavitud" in Borrero Echeverría's speech to the schoolchildren that I cited earlier, the reference to "chains" implicit in the writer's metaphorical use of the term "encadenado" here reverberates with Cuba's recent racial history.[30] Yet, it is not the creole Arruebarrena, but the Anglo-Saxon Frye, who is chained in this metaphor. This tropological turn marks a rejection of the racialized rhetoric representing Cubans as Afro-descendants unable to exercise political agency

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[29] Fattacciu gives slightly different variations on these anecdotes, claiming that Frye had the Cuban flag drawn on the blouses of all the women aboard the ship (62). She also states that Frye and Arruebarrena donated 100,000 copies of the "Bayamesa" to Cuban schools to commemorate their wedding, modifying the first line of the second stanza from "no temáis los feroces íberos" to "no temáis al gobierno extranjero" (75). Regardless of the details, Frye's and Arruebarrena's anti-imperial convictions are clear from these accounts.

[30] Borrerro Echeverría would express his anti-imperial sentiments more clearly in his 1905 short story "El ciervo encantado".

effectively that had underlain the civics-education project at Harvard. Arruebarrena's availability as a marriage partner to Frye—a status that an Afro-descended woman would not have enjoyed in the turn-of-the-nineteenth-century United States—is predicated on this understanding of racial sameness.

Importantly, even as English-language discourse registered constant doubts concerning the racial background of most of the Harvard teachers and Cuban creoles in general, the U.S. press insistently represented Arruebarrena as white. The *New York Daily Tribune* took pains to note that she was the daughter of a Basque sugar planter and had only turned to remunerated educational labor after her family experienced economic setbacks as a result with the war with Spain. The same article claims that, prior to her trip to the United States, she had been employed at a school for children of color in Cárdenas, in this way stressing her whiteness by juxtaposing it with the blackness of the Afro-Cubans whom she is said to have taught ("Wedding" 5). Racially coded in this manner, the Frye-Arruebarrena foundational marriage may be interpreted as embodying an alliance between creole and Anglo-American whites to the exclusion of the Afro-descended popular classes. In this way, it prefigures events such as the 1912 North American (re)invasion of the island, in which the Cuban government accepted U.S. military aid in subduing a rebellion of the Afro-Cuban Partido Independiente de Color.[31] Rather than reinscribing Orientalist images of Cuban women confined by the strictures of Hispanic colonial patriarchy, Borrero Echeverría suggests that, through the allegorical efforts of the white Arruebarrena, Cuba will overcome the "limitations" of its racialized history and achieve equality with the United States. "A small piece of Cuba," the creole Arruebarrena in Borrero Echeverría's discourse leverages her legally sanctioned and racially suitable sexual relations with Frye in order to negotiate more autonomy for the island's creoles—paradoxically, by exerting the sort of republican models of female citizen subjectivity that the imperial government had sought to inculcate in her through the Harvard expedition and exposure to the Massachusetts Women's Club.

Conclusions

Sent to the U.S. by creole elites as a protection against the threat of Afro-Cuban mobocracy and transformed by their covetous North American "protectors" into gendered imperial allegories once they arrived there, teachers such as Arruebarrena

[31] For an authoritative history of this episode, see Helg.

moved in a matrix of misogynistic metaphors that rendered their racialized bodies a field upon which Hispanic and Anglo-Saxon patriarchs vied for control of the newly republican island. Though their agency was real, it would be dangerous to overestimate their power to thwart U.S. imperial designs in Cuba. While Military Governor Wood visited the Harvard Summer School on July 25, 1900 and met with Eliot and several of the teachers (Rem 148) and even promised $100,000 to finance the project the following summer ("Blames Gen. Wood"), he evidently was unhappy with the direction that the program was taking. Frye eventually resigned and was replaced by Lieutenant Matthew H. Hanna, a former schoolteacher from Ohio who openly sought to model the Cuban educational system on that of the United States (Foner: II 462-63). At the same time, however, it would be an oversimplification to view Arruebarrena—or the country that she allegorizes—as a passively conquered terrain. After all, questionable though the racial politics surrounding the situation may strike us, in the end, the island was not annexed to the United States, but, like Arruebarrena, "accepted a mild form of protectorate" in which Cuban creoles in fact did enjoy a measure of self-government.

Of course, unlike the fictional foundational novels that it parodically resembles, the story of Frye and Arruebarrena did not end when its anonymous writers laid down their pens. After Frye's break with the Military Government in Cuba, the couple eventually moved to Northern California, where Frye became involved in real estate development (Beattie). Even in this new venture, he could not escape the metanarrative of racial imperialism; California, after all, had been conquered from Mexico a mere two generations before the couple's arrival there, and Pacific Coast real estate was proving lucrative at the time largely as a result of the position that the United States had carved for itself in Asian markets, in part, through the conquest of the Philippines in the 1898 war. The society pages of area newspapers over the course of the twentieth century indicate that, despite Arruebarrena's Hispano-Caribbean origins, the family integrated itself uneventfully into the Bay Area's white Anglo-Saxon Protestant elite ("Redlands"; "Scott Christopher Edwards"; Beattie). In this light, it would seem that, the couple's anti-imperial politics aside, the Frye-Arruebarrena marriage really does represent a white closing of ranks in the name of Cuban coloniality, a situation that, in one form or another, would endure on the island at least until the 1959 revolution.

Yet, the family's story ends anything but "happily ever after." The allegorically named Pearl Eliot Frye died in infancy and was buried in the community that her father

developed ("Pearl Eliot Frye").[32] At the risk of sophomoric sentimentality, I cannot help but wonder if her death is not at least as fitting an allegory of U.S.-creole collaboration as her parents' marriage. The fruit born of uneasy negotiation between U.S. colonialism and creole agency that the Frye-Arruebarrena alliance represents withers and is returned to California soil already stamped by colonialism, signifying the inescapable hegemony of racial imperialism in the twentieth-century Americas.

At some point, of course, the allegorical hermeneutic that I am employing here becomes ridiculous and—given the real-life nature of the suffering that these events entail—abusive. But at what point? The narrative of Frye and Arruebarrena's marriage actively encourages an allegorical interpretation at the same time that the complex and shifting nature of the alliances and identities that it performs resists such a facile reading. Refashioning the nation-building genre of the foundational fiction in imperial terms in order to rescript the imperial romance in nationalist terms, the story of Arruebarrena and Frye's marriage escapes the grasp of traditional categories of analysis. Following the generic conventions of nineteenth-century novels but related as factual events by journalists, Arruebarrena and Frye's transnational union suggests that imperial foundational romances of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries could be penned—and parodied—in the realm of the "symbolics of daily existence": in newspaper stories, personal correspondence, and popular writings. Representing reality through the tropes of fiction and imaging transnational alliances through structures designed to interpellate national communities, this intergeneric discourse, like the imperial world that it articulates, pushes beyond the boundaries of both the novel and the nation, deploying a hybrid discourse to narrate—or, perhaps, fail to narrate—a hybrid political form.

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[32] In 1917, the couple named a second daughter Pearl Frye. She would grow up to become the author and painter Pearl Frye Rau. One of her paintings is owned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City ("Redlands"; "María Teresa Arruebarrena Frye"; "The Thrown Rider").

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