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High atop the Castillo de la Real Fuerza in old Havana a bronze wind vane crafted in the figure of a woman sways in the breeze as she surveys the horizon that stretches to her north. Official guidebooks and architectural histories of the city relate that the statue symbolizing victory was inspired by a similar figure, La Giraldilla, that watches over the city of Seville, Spain.¹ Local Cuban lore tells a different story, however, as Cubans claim the woman atop La Fuerza as one of their own: Doña Isabel de Bobadilla, the widow of Hernán de Soto, who came to Cuba in 1538 to organize and equip his ill-fated expedition to conquer La Florida.² Isabel remained in Cuba while her husband sailed on his fateful voyage in May 1539. According to Cuban legend, when the news of de Soto's death reached Havana, Doña Isabel died of a broken heart.³ The figure atop La Fuerza, then, symbolizes the faithful wife, who scans the Straits of Florida for eternity, always turning toward the wind that will bring her missing husband home.⁴

Beginning with the life history of Isabel de Bobadilla, it is Cuban women, nurtured in a tradition of gender relations particular to the island, who have lent their life experiences to the inspiration and conceptual framework for the essays in this issue. The essays provide an interdisciplinary analysis of women's contributions to political, social, and economic processes on the island that reads across the grain of patriarchal history. They emphasize the female experience, at various times and within various groups in Cuban society, as a means of exploring the tumultuous road to national identity. Building upon established concepts that inform women's studies, this collection identifies unique themes that recur throughout Cuban history and contributed to women's lives: the malleability of Cuban identity, militarization and militancy, and disorder and uncertainty in politics, the economy, and society. Individually and collectively, these factors have often allowed—indeed, *demande*d—that Cuban women trespass traditional gender boundaries. In this, the unique circumstances of the island differentiates Cuban women's experiences from those of women in other regions. Beginning with the earliest years of settlement and continuing into the twenty-first century, the degree to which Cuban women have participated in extraordinary activities has become increasingly more frequent, so that, in turn, their ability to trespass grew to be the norm, an expectation that presented the island's people with openings for the evolution of a unique identity. The expectation that they would cross gender boundaries represents a constant in Cuban women's lives, whether applied to Isabel de Bobadilla in the sixteenth century,

to the *mambisas* of the independence struggles from 1868 to 1898, or to women such as Celia Sánchez who made the Cuban Revolution a reality.

Setting the Historic Precedent

Many books have been written about the conquerors of the Americas but virtually nothing is known about their women, among them Isabel de Bobadilla, a remarkable woman by modern standards, who was even more remarkable for her day. Born into the highest nobility in Spain, Doña Isabel led a colorful and exciting life. Her family associations linked her with the Hapsburg Court and also with many of the men who were at the vanguard of exploration, conquest, and settlement of the Americas.⁵ She was most certainly related to Francisco de Bobadilla, the *visitador* who was sent to Hispaniola in 1499 to bring Christopher Columbus's recalcitrant colony under control, and who ultimately arrested the Admiral and returned him to Spain in chains.⁶ Her uncle, the Count of Gómera, served as the governor of that island in the Canary Islands that was the stopover point for ships sailing to the New World.⁷ Isabel's first husband, Pedro d'Arias (Pedrarias), was one of the conquerors of Central America, who was subsequently rewarded with the governorship of Nicaragua. In compliance with the decrees that dictated that married men must bring their wives with them to the Indies, Isabel accompanied d'Arias to Central America in 1514.⁸ After Arias's death in 1531, Isabel returned to Spain, where she married Hernán de Soto. Later, in similar fashion, she would accompany her new husband to his post in Cuba, from whence he would launch his expedition to conquer Florida.⁹

The sixteenth century was a dangerous time in the Spanish Empire. One could never be certain who was friend and who was foe, either on a personal or a political basis. The conquerors of the Americas were an unruly bunch who would casually discard any loyalty to their comrades in order to serve their own interests.¹⁰ Compounding matters, Spain's American possessions were under attack from her European rivals, and beginning in 1504, French "raiders, traders and invaders" led the assault against Spanish settlements in the Caribbean.¹¹ Under such circumstances, de Soto's decision to name Isabel de Bobadilla as acting governor of Cuba in his absence was an extraordinary (and telling) act.¹²

Hernán de Soto's unusual decision not only broke with tradition within sixteenth-century patriarchal society, but it also spoke volumes as to his opinion of her capacity to govern. In the cutthroat atmosphere of the early colonies, Isabel de Bobadilla would have been granted no concessions for her gender; thus, she must have possessed the toughness, shrewdness, and good judgment required to negotiate the political minefield of Spanish Court politics.¹³ Significantly, de Soto trusted her above his male counterparts, so he certainly was

convinced of her competence and loyalty to the union formed by their marriage. A wealth of surviving documents demonstrate that she was not merely the *de jure* governor of the island, but the *de facto* governor as well. During her tenure (1539–1543), she dealt with many of the mundane issues that confronted all New World governors, such as the treatment of the Cuban Indians, but at the same time she was able to neutralize the bitter partisan rivalries among the European settlers.¹⁴ Simultaneously, she advanced the work, begun by her husband, on Havana's first fortress—the predecessor of La Fuerza, which would bear her image—so that the city would be able to withstand the enemy attacks that daily were becoming more frequent.¹⁵ More important, correspondence addressed directly to Isabel from the king of Spain acknowledged her status as governor, thereby setting the precedent for legitimate trespass for the generations of women to come.

The conditions that shaped Isabel de Bobadilla's life became the circumstances under which the women of Cuba would live their lives for the following five centuries. French freebooters led by Jacques Sores sacked Havana and burned Doña Isabel's fortress in 1555. Over the next two centuries attacks on and invasions of Cuba were frequent; only Havana, with its immense fortifications and military presence, was immune to the daily threat. Even that changed in 1762 when the city fell to a siege and bombardment mounted by a British naval squadron. As a consequence, the province of Florida was ceded to Britain in 1763 and the Florida community evacuated to Havana. From the moment they set foot on Cuban soil, the women from Florida petitioned the Spanish monarch for an acknowledgment of their sacrifices, for a recognition of their status, and for financial redress. In 1772 Charles III (1759–1788) agreed to the women's demands, writing: "These are not ordinary women [*señoras . . . no ordinarias*] . . . and so they shall be recognized."¹⁶ In so doing, he reinforced and legitimized the singular range of behavior allowed to Cuban women.

Concepts and Themes

This collection of articles addresses a long-neglected area of Cuban studies, the role of women in shaping the island's identity. Over the past several decades, the study of women's issues in Latin America has evolved to a relatively high level of sophistication, but scholarship on Cuba lags behind.¹⁷ With some notable exceptions, the use of gender as a conceptual category has been underutilized for the island.¹⁸ The study of gender becomes more complicated when the concept of national identity (*cubanía, cubanidad, lo cubano*) is factored in to the analysis. Just what and who are Cuban are contested concepts. And while a long scholarly tradition has developed which seeks to define the complex development of national identity, and many authors who contribute to the tradition find various ways of describing the enigma, few offer explanations of

how and/or why identity is so elusive.¹⁹ Moreover, a gendered dimension is rarely included. By viewing identity formation from the inside out — that is, from a subjective perspective — we hope to begin to understand this problem.

We begin with the historical circumstances that guided Isabel de Bobadilla and the lives of the women who followed in her footsteps. To be sure, the established caveats of Latin American women's studies in general — family, paternalism, religion, race, honor, shame, status, and subordination — must play a strong conceptual role in any gendered study. The fundamental concepts of women's studies combine with recurrent and pervasive themes particular to Cuba that run throughout this collection of essays. The first of these themes is the malleability of Cuban identity. Perhaps more than in any other region, Cuba was shaped by its immigrants. Clearly, Isabel de Bobadilla was a *peninsular*; she lived in Cuba but six years. Yet she has been adopted in Cuban popular culture as one of the fundamental symbols of how immigrant women — European noblewomen, Canary Island commoners, Floridana exiles, African priestesses, and French prostitutes — were transformed into the mothers of subsequent generations of *creole* Cubans. Perhaps as in no other region, the island was most successful in incorporating its waves of immigrants, providing them with a feeling of Cubanness.²⁰ A second, closely related conceptual category is that of racial identification, race mixture, and/or the social consequences of race mixture among European, African, indigenous, and Asian peoples. All these races added to the ethnic mix in Cuba that has come to be termed *ajiaco*, a type of stew.²¹ Like national identity, ethnic identity is also malleable, depending upon time and place. Combined with a militant Cuban nationalism that emerged in the nineteenth century, this ethnic component of identity has developed into a complex and ever-changing aspect of modern Cuban identity.

Among the more important factors in creating a national identity are national myths.²² Although romantic myths contribute to the concept of national identity (often at the expense of historical accuracy), for Cuban women, these myths universally involve the ideal of sacrifice. The creation of the myth of Isabel de Bobadilla began as early as 1605; by 1634, when the original bronze statue of the conqueror's wife was placed atop La Fuerza, her transformation into a national icon had already begun.²³ According to the myth, Isabel represented the original, ultimate sacrifice, through the loss of her husband, which led, in turn, to the loss of her own life from the grief of a broken heart. It would be nearly three hundred years before the “unpoetic documents [that] prove[d] that she lived many years longer in Spain” would be discovered, thanks to the dogged scholarship of another woman, Irene A. Wright, whose work has left a lasting imprint on studies of the island.²⁴

Mythmaking was also a powerful component in reinforcing Cuba's loyalty to Spain. In the eighteenth century, the “Damas de la Havana” were once again called upon to sacrifice for Cuba. This time, they were asked to give up their

jewels so as to finance the French fleet that was ready to sail to Yorktown to engage the British in their war with the American colonies. Ultimately, it was said, this sacrifice had led to the independence of the former British colonies in America. Two centuries would pass before the historian James A. Lewis would establish that the actual source of funds for this operation was the *situado* (subsidy), a fund that originated in Mexico that was usually earmarked to pay the salaries of soldiers, but was used instead to subsidize the French fleet.²⁵

The most enduring example of the power of mythmaking is in the legend that has grown up around Mariana Grajales, mother of the Maceo brothers and the quintessential example of sacrifice, since nine of her children lost their lives in the wars of independence. By the mid-twentieth century, the myth of Mariana had assumed such proportions that she was designated the “official mother of Cuba.”²⁶ This contrasts with other Latin American nations who often have difficulty in reconciling their myths about heroic female protagonists.²⁷ Such is not the case in Cuba, however, where even into the present, the unequivocal measure of womanhood in Cuba remains her duty to sacrifice for the good of the nation.

The malleability of Cuban identity, the racial component of identity in Cuba, and mythmaking are all conceptual categories that contribute to understanding Cuban women’s experiences in general, but certain themes influence this collection of essays in particular. The first is the pervasive influence of militarization that, over a period of five centuries, became ingrained in the collective Cuban mentality.²⁸ From its earliest days, Cuba was forced to dedicate enormous resources to its own defense. By the nineteenth century, the danger of invasion had abated, but the military then became preoccupied with struggles from within, which took the shape of slave rebellion, protests against Spanish rule, and uprisings against elected governments in the Republic. Because their men were often absent and life was precarious, Cuban women became accustomed to being in charge and assumed tasks that were not generally performed by women. Moreover, living in a militarized society led to a unparalleled degree of militancy on the part of Cuban women.

The permanent state of political instability also created an internal climate predicated upon disorder and uncertainty.²⁹ Political instability goes hand-in-hand with economic insolvency. As Cuba moved toward a monoculture economy based upon sugar production, its economic foundations became increasingly less stable and its internal economy increasingly more precarious. Uncertainty even extended to the environment. The island was continually at risk for hurricanes alternating with drought, and the effects of climate and disaster became more severe as the island’s population increased. In addition, until the early twentieth century, the multitude of fevers and epidemics made life both miserable and vulnerable for the island’s residents. As a consequence, Cubans continually lived on the brink of disaster, in a paradoxical state of both

apprehension and constant readiness. Women were expected to be able to take charge of their families on a moment's notice, and thus, the women of Cuba became accustomed to a blurring of gender roles between proper and improper female behavior, lines of demarcation that were inviolable elsewhere.

The essays presented here share one or more of the themes outlined above, and all point to a repeated phenomenon: the traversing of gender boundaries and the exalting of women who traversed such boundaries to defy invaders and uphold the government, be it monarchy or nation, democracy or socialist revolution. From colonial Hispanic society, Cuba inherited a patriarchal society. Yet, circumstances propelled the women of Cuba, willingly and unwillingly, to invade masculine territory over and over again. Still, the fact that women assumed men's tasks or were identified as symbols of leadership or images of the nation did not imply a defiance of the incumbent patriarchy. Quite the contrary: it meant executing extreme bravery for the island and for the men who governed it.

Our studies of how Cuban women traversed gender boundaries have led us to new understandings — of the origins of patriotic loyalty, of the idea of female honor and fidelity to a nation, of feminine purity applied to politics, of the promotion of commercialized sex as a means for men to ascend to political power, and of female acquisition of power through the practice of Afro-Cuban religion. In short, because Cuba experienced rapid and disorienting change, women were consistently challenged to behave exceptionally in the male domain without toppling the myth of the patriarchy. The essays here also contribute to Cuban historiography by associating the constant threat the island has faced since the Spanish conquest with the expectation that women will assume extraordinary responsibilities. Such expectations have had an effect on Cuba's national image and on the gendering of its national culture. Over time, social norms were so often violated that the definitions of the norms themselves became blurred. The trespassing of boundaries led to new understandings, bridges to new social relations in keeping with social desires. It also resulted in the absence of defining qualities, a lack of clear direction, and a constant state of "becoming" that never crystallized into a shared sense of self. Gender relations and divisions are, of course, foundational norms that have governed families, neighborhoods, and communities from colonial times to the present. If these distinctions are blurred, then the larger institutions of politics and society are also unclear, uncertain, and potentially contested.³⁰

The Contributions

The selection of contributors balances the work of established scholars with that of relative newcomers to the field, and the theoretical and methodological approaches are deliberately multidisciplinary. The collection begins with an

essay by Sherry Johnson that challenges one of the most enduring myths about female behavior during the British occupation of Havana in 1762. Set within the theoretical framework of recent scholarship on honor, Johnson argues that because of the exigencies of the conflict, rather than engaging in traitorous activities, white women, free women of color, and slave wives assumed responsibilities normally reserved for men. The author speculates that the experiences of Cuba's eighteenth-century women, forged in the crucible of continual warfare, provided the roots for the *mambisa* tradition in the following century. Miguel W. Ramos's essay establishes the consequences of a personal feud among three female priestesses of the African religion Regla de Ocha, which led to the cult's dispersion to Matanzas in the late 1880s. Ramos's work combines historical evidence, folklore, and oral history in the tradition of Fernando Ortiz and Lydia Cabrera. It offers, perhaps, the most salient example of the multiplicity of issues that are raised in this collection of essays. K. Lynn Stoner's contribution follows the evolution of the woman warrior as a cultural symbol from the Ten Years War through the Revolution. Stoner's analysis demonstrates how individual heroines sacrificed themselves and their families in challenging colonialism, imperialism, and dictatorship, and how each heroic warrior was appropriated by the regime in power to create national myths to sustain its authority. Drawing upon method and theory in recent scholarship on prostitution, Mayra Beers examines the demimonde of Havana in 1908 and establishes the power of mythmaking in a society searching for an independent identity. Her work explores Cuba's nascent nationalism through a biography of one of its most enigmatic figures, Alberto Yarini y Ponce de León — descended from an aristocratic family, but renowned as the most famous pimp in Cuban history. Yarini's wide appeal to many sectors of Havana society makes him the quintessential example of an individual whose identity crossed race, class, and gender boundaries. In his piece, Kirwin (Kirk) Shaffer demonstrates how anarchists used gender issues to critique the unsatisfying reality that faced the Cuban nation after 1902. Through an analysis of anarchists' political tracts and popular culture, Shaffer demonstrates how the victimization of women was both a reality and a powerful tool used by radicals to enlist new recruits to their cause. Tiffany Thomas-Woodard reveals mythmaking in action in her profile of one of the most important women in recent Cuban history, Celia Sánchez Manduley. Sánchez was Fidel Castro's constant companion beginning with their guerrilla activities against Fulgencio Batista's dictatorship in the 1950s and continuing until her death in January 1980. She was one of the most influential personalities of revolutionary Cuba and her life story has given rise to some of the most enduring and pervasive gender images and behavioral norms of modern Cuba. K. Lynn Stoner's conclusion recapitulates how Cuban scholarship has recorded the female experience throughout the twentieth century. She finds that the story of women's lives has rarely been told by women

themselves, that their experiences have been appropriated to project national values, and that traversing gender lines has not challenged the patriarchy but instead has bolstered it.

NOTES

1. Joaquín E. Weiss, *La arquitectura colonial cubana*, vol. 1 (Havana: Editorial Letras Cubanas, 1979), 36.
2. Nicolás Quintana, personal communication, 22 May 2001.
3. Irene A. Wright, *The Early History of Cuba* (1916; reprint, New York: Octagon Books, 1970), 170–72.
4. Quintana, personal communication.
5. Queen of Spain to Isabel de Bobadilla, 14 January 1532, in *Colección de documentos inéditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista, y organización de las antiguas posesiones españolas de américa y oceanía* (Madrid: Imprenta de Manuel G. Hernández, 1864–84), 41:493–94 (hereafter cited as *Colección de documentos inéditos*).
6. Carl Ortwin Sauer, *The Early Spanish Main* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966), 102–7. The familial relationship between Doña Isabel and Francisco de Bobadilla remains a mystery, complicated because as least two accounts incorrectly identify her as the daughter of Pedro d’Arias; see El Inca Garcilaso (de la Vega), *La Florida del Inca*, introducción y notas por Carmen de Mora (1605; reprint, Madrid: Alianza Universal, 1988), 138; and Wright, *Early History of Cuba*, 167. Documentary evidence demonstrates that she was d’Arias’s wife (see note 8, below).
7. Wright, *Early History of Cuba*, 167.
8. King of Spain to Pedrarias Dávila, 1514, *Colección de documentos inéditos*, 39:325–29; Escritura de Doña Isabel de Bobadilla viuda de Pedrarias de Avila, 10 May 1532, *Colección de documentos inéditos*, 41:497–503.
9. License granted to Isabel de Bobadilla, Seville, 16 February 1538, legajo 1962, Indiferente General, Archivo General de Indias (hereafter AGI), Seville, Spain.
10. Sauer, *Early Spanish Main* (248) describes the conquest as being marked by “naked greed and cold cruelty.”
11. Paul E. Hoffman, *The Spanish Crown and the Defense of the Caribbean, 1535–1585: Precedent, Patrimonialism, and Royal Parsimony* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), 39–62, 112.
12. Wright, *Early History of Cuba*, 170–71.
13. Representative examples of the labyrinthine morass of court politics are the suits filed by Isabel Ponce de Leon against Hernán Ponce de León, her late husband’s partner. These include Isabel de Bobadilla vs. Hernán Ponce de León, 28 January 1550, 3 November 1550, Valladolid, número 2, ramo 143, legajo 280, Patronato Real 280, AGI; Hernán Ponce de León vs. Isabel de Bobadilla, 12 May 1552, Madrid, número 2, ramo 108 & 109, legajo 281, Patronato Real, AGI; and Hernán Ponce de León vs. Isabel de Bobadilla, 12 March 1554, legajo 750A and legajo 750B, Justicia, AGI.
14. “Averiguación sobre indios,” 9 May 1545, Seville, legajo 1963, Indiferente General, AGI.
15. Real Cédula to Doña Isabel de Bobadilla, 7 October 1540, legajo 1121, Audiencia de Santo Domingo, AGI.
16. Royal Order, 14 August 1772, Madrid, legajo 1154, Papeles Procedentes de Cuba, AGI. The passage reads: “Es el animo del Rey que las familias floridananas se las distinga y mire segun sus

piadosas intenciones; estas sras en sus clases no ordinarias, que con su modo de pensar lo acreditan merecer que assi se las trate.”

17. Sueanne Caulfield, “The History of Gender in the Historiography of Latin America,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 81 (August–November 2001): 449–90, provides a recent look at how the field has grown. Other important works are Asunción Lavrin, “In Search of the Colonial Woman in Mexico: The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,” in *Latin American Women: Historical Perspectives*, ed. Asunción Lavrin (Westport, Ct.: Greenwood Press, 1978), 23–61; Asunción Lavrin, “Women in Spanish American Colonial Society,” *The Cambridge History of Latin America*, vol. 2., *Colonial Latin America*, ed. Leslie Bethell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 321–55; K. Lynn Stoner, “Directions in Latin American Women’s History, 1977–1985,” *Latin American Research Review* 22 (January 1987): 101–34; and Susan Midgen Socolow, *The Women of Colonial Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). In addition, although the essays here are primarily about women, any study of gender, by definition, must consider relationships between men and women. Also, recent trends in gay and lesbian studies are important but are beyond the scope of our volume (see Ian Lumsden, *Machos, Maricones, and Gays: Cuba and Homosexuality* [Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996]).

18. The list of scholars who have written about Cuban women and their works includes: Verena Martínez-Alier, *Marriage, Class, and Colour in Nineteenth-Century Cuba: A Study of Racial Attitudes and Sexual Values in a Slave Society* (1974; reprint, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992); Carmen Diana Deere, “Rural Women and Agrarian Reform in Peru, Chile, and Cuba,” in *Women and Change in Latin America*, ed. June Nash and Helen Safa (South Hadley, Mass.: Bergin and Garvey, 1986), 189–207; Helen Safa, ed., *The Myth of the Male Breadwinner: Women and Industrialization in the Caribbean* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1995); Raquel Vinat de la Mata, “El Trabajo de la Aguja,” unpublished manuscript in possession of the editors, 1999; Catherine Davies, *A Place in the Sun? Women Writers in Twentieth-Century Cuba* (London: Zed Books, 1997); Jean Stubbs, “Gender Constructs of Labor in Prerevolutionary Tobacco,” *Social and Economic Studies* 37 (March–June 1988): 241–69; Jean Stubbs, “Social and Political Motherhood in Cuba: Mariana Grajales Cuello,” in *Engendering History: Caribbean Women in Historical Perspective*, ed. Verene Shepherd, Bridget Brereton, and Barbara Bailey (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1995), 296–317; Lois M. Smith and Alfred Padula, eds., *Sex and Revolution: Women in Socialist Cuba* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); Vera Kutzinski, *Sugar’s Secrets: Race and the Erotics of Cuban Nationalism* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1995); K. Lynn Stoner, ed. and comp., with Luís Hipólito Serrano Pérez, *Cuban and Cuban American Women: An Annotated Bibliography* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 2000); and K. Lynn Stoner, *From the House to the Streets: The Cuban Woman’s Movement for Legal Reform, 1898–1940* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1991). An important recent study published in Cuba is Instituto de Literatura y Lingüística, *Con el lente oblicuo: Aproximaciones cubanas a los estudios de género* (Havana: Editorial de la Mujer, 1999); coordinated by Susana Montero Sanchez and Zaida Capote Cruz, this volume contains essays by many important writers on gender in present-day Cuba, including Zaida Capote, “La doncella y el minotauro,” 38–44; Susan Montero, “Apostillas a la generacion del 98: Una mirada desde la ginocritica,” 111–19; Nara Araújo, “Aceptar y escapar: Viajeras mexicanas en el siglo XIX: Una cuestion de genero,” 92–110; and Luisa Campuzano, “Últimos textos de una dama: Crónicas y memorias de Dulce María Loynaz,” 77–89.

19. The list of works analyzing Cuban identity is endless. We cite here only the most recent or most significant: Damián J. Fernández and Madelín Cámara, eds., *Cuba, The Elusive Nation: Interpretations of National Identity* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000); Jorge Duany, *From the Cuban Ajiaco to the Cuban-American Hyphen: Changing Discourses of National Identity on the Island and in the Diaspora* (Miami: Cuban Studies Association, 1997); Gustavo Pérez

Firmat, *Life on the Hyphen: The Cuban-American Way* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994); Uva de Aragón Clavijo, *El caimán ante el espejo: Un ensayo de interpretación de lo cubano* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1993); Fernando Ortiz, *Entre cubanos: Psicología tropical* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1987); Jorge Mañach, *Indagación del choteo* (Havana: Revista del Avance, 1928).

20. Fernando Ortiz's famous term *transculturation* is appropriate here (see Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*, trans. Harriet de Onis [Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press 1995], 97–103).

21. Fernando Ortiz, "Los factores humanos de la cubanidad," *Revista Bimestre Cubana*, no. 45 (1940), 165–69. The editors thank Leonardo Falcón for providing the correct citation for this well-known phrase.

22. Doris Sommer, *Foundational Fictions: The National Romances of Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

23. Garcilaso (de la Vega), *La Florida del Inca*, 125, 138; Weiss, *La arquitectura colonial cubana*, 1:36, 177.

24. Wright, *Early History of Cuba*, 172.

25. James E. Lewis, "Las Damas de la Havana, el Precursor, and Francisco de Saavedra: A Note on Spanish Participation in the Battle of Yorktown," *The Americas* 37 (July 1980): 83–99.

26. Stubbs, "Social and Political Motherhood," 296–317; Adys Cupull, *Mariana: Raíz del alma cubana* (Havana: Editora Política, 1998).

27. Sandra Messinger Cypess, *La Malinche in Mexican Literature from History to Myth* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991).

28. For the negative effects of militarization and the development of *caudillismo* in Cuba, see de Aragón Clavijo, *El caimán ante el espejo*.

29. Anyone familiar with Cuban history can recite the list of internal and external conflicts: the Haitian Revolution from 1791 to 1804; the Infante Conspiracy of 1810; the Aponte Conspiracy of 1812; the Soles y Rayos de Bolívar in 1823; the Lorenzo Conspiracy in 1837; the Conspiracy of La Escalera in 1843–44; the Narciso López expeditions from 1849 to 1851; the Ten Years War, 1868–78; the Guerra Chiquita in 1879; and the War of Independence, 1895–98. The twentieth century was little better, with various rebellions against the constitutional government in 1906, 1912 and 1917; the U.S. interventions in 1906 and 1921; the Revolution of 1933; the coup d'état in 1952; and the Revolution of 1959. These "official" conflicts do not include the various conspiracies, insurgencies, and skirmishes that led up to the wars. And if we take into account the plague of piracy from 1816 to 1830 and a similar plague of banditry from the 1880s through 1898, the degree of uncertainty in daily life cannot be underestimated.

30. Many thanks to my co-editor, K. Lynn Stoner, for contributing the majority of the preceding passage.