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"THE PRESENCE OF THE PRINTED TEXT IN PUERTO RICAN CULTURE"

Now, as on certain other occasions, I must fulfill the inevitable obligation of expressing my most heartfelt appreciation to the members of this Board for the great honor they have bestowed upon me. In all modesty, I accept this token of your great benevolence and magnanimity. I also wish to convey to all of you, my distinguished friends, my deep gratitude for your presence on this occasion.

With this said, perhaps we now may move on to the subject at hand, Puerto Rico, which continues to be of particular concern to all of us.

The discovery of Puerto Rico, as we all know, took place on November 19, 1493. By August 12, 1512, the process of colonization was under way. Within a year, Puerto Rico's first nucleus of Spanish settlers had been firmly established. Over time, this settlement began to envelop and embrace the island's indigenous and African elements. From this vital and ebullient foundation a new society began to take shape, one which might have referred to itself initially as the island colony or country, but which inevitably became identified as Puerto Rican.

The process of development for a new society presupposes a long series of thorny and complex questions of a historical nature. Despite the obvious importance each of these particular questions might pose, our modest investigations will focus on the overall scope and magnitude which the written text—the book—has had in the formation of the island's intellectual culture; this given the framework of Spain serving as missionary for its own culture, as well as a conduit for European culture in general, and with the understanding that the written text is one of the primary bases for all intellectual culture.

The oldest information we have relating to the importing of books into Puerto Rico identifies Miguel Manso as one of the first residents to amass a collection of texts. On October 10, 1512, Manso would bring in the works of Sallust, the prolific Roman historian, the author of the *Conspiracy of Catiline*. On that same date, another island resident, Gregorio Gaitán, would import six books on medicine and surgery. On December 25 of the same year, Bishop Alonso Manso would bring with him a collection of two hundred thirty volumes, including a text by Virgil, as well as various *Oraciones, Evangelios and Epístolas*. On November 18, 1513, the bishop would also requisition a small chest of books through the intermediary of Majordomo Hernando Manso.

On October 25, 1513, Alonso Hernández imported a book on the Gospels and a breviary. On July 18, 1516, Fernando de Ávila would transport in various tomes of history and poetry. On December 16 of that same year, Pedro de Arévalo imported six printed volumes containing the *Leyes de Toro*, the *Confession* and the *Flos Sanctorum*.

An inventory from 1528 also describes the collection of an attorney, Antonio de la Gama, which most notably included the text *Fuero Juzgo*. The notes of Pastor Layfield, chaplain to the invading forces of Lord Cumberland, describe the Dominican Convent of San Juan, which by 1598 had amassed a collection of books, many of which were "bound in brilliant covers."

Thus, from the early 16th century, books clearly begin to serve their function as a promoter of culture, as if the settlers of this new land were quite cognizant of the profound truths contained in Sallust's *Conspiracy of Cataline*:

"It becomes all men, who desire to excel other animals, to strive, to the utmost of their power, not to pass through life in obscurity, like the beasts of the field, which nature has formed groveling and subservient to appetite.... It appears to me, therefore, more reasonable to pursue glory by means of the intellect than of bodily strength, and, since the life which we enjoy is short, to make the remembrance of us as lasting as possible."

Or, as if they were also aware of Cicero's maxim: "Books are the greatest nourishment in youth and the greatest recreation in old age." Or Calderón de la Barca's assertion: "A book is the most discrete of friends." Or that profound saying by Duclos: "He who knows how to read, already knows the most difficult of the arts."

In the 17th century, Fray Bernardo de Balbuena, who served as bishop of Puerto Rico beginning in 1619, had already gained considerable renown as a poet and bibliophile. Balbuena had brought quite an extensive collection of volumes from Mexico, which, as Fray Martín Vázquez de Arce would remark, "provide great consolation to the soul, and disencumber it of vain and false hopes." The priest Diego de Torres Vargas also had a rather vast cache of books, at least judging from related accounts in the Memoirs he wrote in 1647.

In the 18th century, the second of our renowned poets, who identified himself by the pseudonym "Afecto Servidor" [Affectionate Servant], appears to have been the owner of a rather large library. The *Relación Verídica* [True Account], which he wrote in 1747, copiously borrows excerpts from the Holy Scriptures, as well as from the works of Plutarch, Aristides, Ovid, Pliny, Virgil, Hercules Gallus, and Cervantes.

The potential stimulus such collections might spark over the course of the first three centuries of colonial rule did not seem to bear much fruit in terms of establishing a noteworthy literary culture. This fact seems perfectly understandable if we consider that the island environment was not particularly hospitable to such stimulus, given that the initial settlers were faced with the far more pressing needs of nurturing some core of civilization within this relative wilderness. The corrosive effects of indigenous attacks and pirate raids, which remained as rather visceral reminders of the ongoing tasks of colony-building, often on the blood and rancid smoke of torched settlements; the profound sense of prostration produced by competition from the rest of the hemisphere, with the real or imagined treasures of such chimeric empires as Omagua, Moxo and El Dorado would often leave the island reeling in its own listless trance, continually threatened with financial ruin. No less daunting were the political and economic restrictions imposed by the colonial government, the withering effects of early censorship laws, and the infantile state of public education.

Given this overwhelming range of factors, the average Puerto Rican hardly had the wherewithal to devote himself or herself to the cultivation of the literary arts, particularly when there was no real environment for propitiating them. As Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo would remark: "the arts of inspiration are delicate plants which rarely achieve any splendor or vigor unless they are carressed by the wafts of peace"; and, according to José Carlos Mariátegui, "the culture of a people is both nourished and supported by the political and economic substratum." Such conditions were largely absent during Puerto Rico's formative period.

Despite all this, the stimulus initially sown by these early private libraries was not without its own effects. Various praiseworthy ideas and initiatives were disseminated, many of which helped to intellectually shape the great figures of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. The first examples of a literary culture on the island began to appear in the form of letters,

poetry, history, religious oratory and philosophy, which were employed to some considerable effect by Juan Ponce de León, Alonso Manso, Baltasar de Castro, Juan Troche, Antonio de Santaclara, Damián López de Haro, Diego de Torres Vargas, Francisco Ayerra Santamaría, El Afecto Servidor, Francisco García de Guadianal, Andrés Vilches, Pedro Hernández and Iñigo Abbad y Lasierra. At the same time, as Fr. Torres Vargas points out, there also were many criollos who continued their studies or literary endeavors abroad, thus garnering considerable honor and esteem for Puerto Rico.

With the advent of the 19th century—a veritable turning point for change and progress on the island—the outlook underwent a radical and incisive shift. The new century brought with it a far more accelerated and enlivened pace to all aspects of life on the island. After three centuries of gestation, the solemn Arizmendi – Power episode unfolds, and the idea of a Puerto Rican consciousness, quite distinct from its Spanish ancestry, began to take hold, with an explosion of new forms of social, political and economic energy and direction, and the development of culture in general.

During this century, our literature experienced rapid development, following more orderly and methodical patterns. New genres and styles which were previously unknown in the local literature also began to appear, such as theatrical works, the novel and short story, literary compilations, scholarly works and criticism, *costumbrismo*, political oratory, forensic and academic literature, and journalism. Influences were taken from the most current trends surfacing in Spain, Europe and the Americas.

Various factors, along with an intensified book trade, contributed to these developments.

The first printing press was purchased by Governor Toribio Montes in 1806 from a Frenchman by the name of Delarue, thus opening the way to the dissemination and exchange of new ideas and intellectual influences through the medium of journalism.

In that same year, San Juan's first newspaper, *La Gaceta de Puerto Rico*, made its debut. Soon other periodicals would join its ranks: *El Diario Económico de Puerto Rico* (1814), *El Cigarrón* (1814); *El Diario Liberal y de Variedades de Puerto Rico* (1821); *La Piedra de Toque* (1822), and the *Boletín Instructivo y Mercantil de Puerto Rico* (1839).

Until this time, the island's newspapers were limited to the publications of the capital city. Ten years later, however, this situation would change dramatically. Soon such publications would begin appearing across the island, some inevitably rivaling their San Juan counterparts. In Puerto Rico, as in many other countries, the development of the press would often respond to the interests of specific social groups, who would use news publications as their own mouthpiece.

The views of various political groups or parties were often voiced in these publications. The periodicals echoing the viewpoints of the liberals included *El Investigador*, *El Fomento de Puerto Rico*, *El Mercurio*, *El Progreso*, *La Razón*, *El Derecho*, *La Crónica*, *El Buscapié*, *El Criollo*, *El Autonomista*, *La Democracia* and *El Liberal*. The island's conservative papers included *El Cigarrón*, *El Boletín Mercantil*, *El Español*, *Cándido*, *La Representación Nacional*, *La Nación Española*, *El Pabellón Nacional*, *La Unidad Nacional*, *La Balanza* and *La Integridad Nacional*.

Those with specific interests in agriculture would turn to *El Diario Económico*, *El Eco del Comercio*, *El Compilador Industrial*, *El Economista*, *El Agente de Negocios*, and the *Revista de Agricultura, Industria and Comercio*.

The island's growing health services, pharmacy and medical community produced their own publications: *La Revista Médico-Farmacéutica*, *El Eco Médico-Farmacéutico* and *La Revista de Medicina Dosimétrica, Veterinaria, de Higiene y de Economía Rural*.

Those involved in education published various periodicals, such as *La Instrucción*, *La Instrucción Pública*, *El Liceo*, *El Mentor*, *El Magisterio de Puerto Rico* and *La Enseñanza*.

The island's music lovers, in turn, were responsible for *El Delirio de Puerto Rico*, *El Diapasón*, *La Familia* and *La Recreación del Pianista*. The Catholics had their *Boletín Eclesiástico*, *La Verdad*, *El Semanario Católico* and *El Eco Cristiano*. Spiritualists turned to *El Peregrino*, *El Universo*, *La Luz*, *El Estudio* and *El Neófito*, and the Freemasons published *La Adelfia*, *El Mallete* and *la Revista Masónica*.

Military-oriented publications included *El Voluntario*, *La Bandera Española* and *El Seminario Militar*. The island's school children and student population were avid readers of *La Revista Infantil*, *La Juventud*, *El Colegial* and *El Eco Juvenil*.

Guildmembers and those involved in labor causes would air their views in *El Artesano*, *El Obrero*, *El Eco Proletario*, *La Revista Obrera*, *El Clamor del Obrero*, and *El Ensayo Obrero*.

Literary buffs had a wide range of publications at their disposal, including *La Guirnalda Puertorriqueña*, *Las Brisas de Borinquen*, *La Azucena*, *Los Argos*, *Puerto Rico Ilustrado*, *La Revista Puertorriqueña*, *El Abanico*, *La Academia*, *La Ilustración Puertorriqueña*, *El Palenque de la Juventud*, *El Fígaro* and *El Estudio*, in addition to the literary supplements that appeared in the major news publications of the century.

These periodicals quickly filled an obvious void, and after 1806, the overall outlook on the island would change radically. From this time onward, as Manuel Corchado y Juarbe has remarked:

"...a single truth echoed forth, multiplying a thousandfold across the entire island; that truth seemingly emerged from an immaculate conception, expanding so prodigiously that it reached even those of the most meager means. And thus the Press liberated us from the paucity of human knowledge and past dominions of error."

This same printing press was also employed to produce the island's two first works of literature.

A collection of poetry in a range of metric styles titled *Ocios de la Juventud* was the first to be published, in 1806, by Juan Rodríguez Calderón, a descendent of the Marquis of Santa Cruz, who originally hailed from Galicia. Rodríguez Calderón was appointed director of the press by the governor of Puerto Rico.

In 1812, a second volume was printed on this original press, the *Quadernito de Varias Especies de Coplas muy Devotas*. This collection was the work of Fray Manuel María de Sanlúcar, who was originally baptized under the name of Tomás Ramón Díez Pimentel, in 1781, in his native town of San Lúcar de Barrameda (Andalusia). He changed his name in 1801 when he entered the Capuchin order.

A factor which also contributed to the intellectual and artistic development of Puerto Rico was the establishment of cultural societies throughout the island, the first being the *Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País* [Economic Society of Friends of the Country], which was founded in San Juan in 1814 on the initiatives of Ramón Power Giralt and Alejandro Ramírez Blanco.

Another positive influence was seen in the great number of Spanish translations of foreign works that began to appear, which were also avidly received on the island, thus increasing an appetite for both the foreign and the local. Some examples of the works translated by local authors would include Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Julio Padilla Iguina), Petrarch's *Elegies* (Ramón Emeterio Betances), Alfieri's *Philip II*, (Román Baldorioty de Castro), Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (Luis López Ballesteros), various collections of French poetry (Manuel de Elzaburu Vizcarrondo, Vicente Palés Anés, Manuel Fernández Juncos and Pedro Carlos Timothee Morales), the works of U.S. novelists and poets (Francisco Javier Amy), and a collection of Arabic poetry, *Cantigas de amor* (Carmela Eulate Sanjurjo).

The circulation of new ideas, projects and initiatives was further fomented during this time through the influence of groups of local and foreign professionals who had been educated abroad. These professionals can be essentially divided into four main groups: those who had received instruction in Spain, France, Germany or the United States.

The first group was by far the largest and included Ramón Power Giralt, Ramón Baldorioty de Castro, Eugenio María de Hostos, Segundo Ruiz Belvis, Manuel Corchado y Juarbe, Manuel García Salgado, Gabriel Pilar Cabrera, Francisco del Valle Atilas, Rosendo Matienzo Cintrón, Rafael López Landrón, Herminio Díaz Navarro, José de Diego, and Fr. Domingo Romeu Aguayo.

The second group included such noteworthy figures as Ramón Emeterio Betances, José de Jesús Domínguez, José Marcial Quiñones, Antonio Ruiz Quiñones, José de Jesús Tizol, Eugenio Grau O'Donnell, Carlos Benjamín Hohele, Miguel Larregui Viña and Pedro Gerónimo Goico Sabanetas.

Those who had been educated in Germany included Adolfo Ruiz Belvis, José Guillerand Curbelo, Francisco Mariano Quiñones and Agustín Stahl Stamm.

And finally, those returning from schools in the U.S. included Calixto Romero Cantero, Julio Vizcarrondo Coronado, Gabriel Giménez Sanjurjo, Nicolás Giménez Nussa, Alejandro Ciol Texidor, José Antonio Goicorúa, José Celso Barbosa, Tulio Larrinaga Torres and Francisco Javier Amy. According to poet and journalist Manuel Fernández Juncos, this last group was the "most effective in terms of involvement in the island's literature."

The literary and artistic salons and conferences that began to be held throughout Puerto Rico served as another important stimulus for the promotion of intellectual culture. New ideas were quickly disseminated, fostered by these vehicles for dialogue and discussion. Some of the important venues in San Juan included the offices of the *Boletín Instructivo and Mercantil*, the José Julián Acosta Calbo bookstore, the Toribio Pagani and Pólix J. Padilla residences, the offices of *El Progreso*, the home of Bibiana and Alejandrina Benítez, the Fidel Guillermet y Quintero Pharmacy and the halls of the newly established Ateneo Puertorriqueño. Literary gatherings were held in Mayagüez at the residence of Bonocio Tió Segarra and Lola Rodríguez, at the Círculo de Amigos (Circle of Friends) and the Casino de Mayagüez. Venues in Ponce included the shop of Pedro Garriga, the residence of Lissie Graham, the Casino de Ponce, the Sport Club, and the *Gabinete de Lectura Ponceño* (Ponce Reading Room), as well as the offices of the *La Democracia* newspaper.

Another stimulus for intellectual and artistic culture was found in the public conference, a forum that was initially created in England sometime around 1850, but which later spread to France and the rest of Europe. The first such conference to be held in Puerto Rico occurred on July 19, 1876, at the Ateneo Puertorriqueño, the main topic being *La Marcha Progresiva de la Humanidad en el conocimiento de la Superficie Terrestre* (Progress in Human Knowledge of the Earth) which was presented by José Julián Acosta Calbo.

All these factors had some impact on the local book trade, which due to improving conditions on the island entered a new era of heightened activity.

Until the early 19th century, in Puerto Rico, as in many other countries, book sales were conducted primarily in shops where other merchandise was offered, and books were generally perceived as another consumer product.

During this time, a few merchants in San Juan began to specialize in the book trade. A somewhat laconic notice regarding the public sale of "three boxes of books," which appeared in the local paper *La Gaceta* in 1812, seems particularly significant.

New competition began to appear. Within twenty years, the number of merchants operating as booksellers continued to steadily rise. Some of the most famous of these was Bartolomé Borrás, who in a single shipment imported a total of "973 printed books" into the port of San Juan; José Ferrer, who brought in "271 volumes, in addition to four more boxes of books"; Antonio Suliveras, with "22 volumes and an additional two boxes"; Pedro Guarch

who imported "four boxes"; Benito Carreras, "fourteen boxes of books"; Juan Berenguer, Antonio Pilichi and Gerardo Soler, each importing "two boxes of books"; José Caballer, with "seven trunks of books"; and the retail operations of Vidal Hermanos, Apellaniz e Hijos, and Carreras y Sobrinos, who imported "fifty volumes," "four trunks" and "five cases of books" respectively.

By mid-century, books began to lose some of the promiscuous associations to which they had been subjected since the early 16th century. A more enlightened approach would eventually take hold, with the book inevitably acquiring special status in keeping with its unique nature and importance. These evolving perceptions were also reflected on a commercial level. In mid-1837, the Francisco Márquez Bookstore opened its doors to the public at No. 23 Calle de la Fortaleza. This would be the first major bookstore to be established in San Juan, and most probably the entire island.

Two years later, the Librería y Gabinete de Lectura de Santiago Dalmau (The Santiago Dalmau bookstore and reading room) was founded. In addition to serving as a bookstore, this business also offered a book lending service, which operated through payment of a modest monthly sum. This served as a very useful and fortunate resource, thus fostering cultural dissemination by making its collection available to readers of modest means.

One year after the Dalmau establishment opened, the Juan González Chaves bookstore was launched. San Juan eventually became the proud home to numerous other bookstores, including businesses established by Florentino Gimbernat, José Solves, Francisco Ramos, José M. Sánchez Enríquez, Federico Asenjo Arteaga, Bernardino Sanjurjo Vidal, and Pastor Manuel de Jesús Ríos. Various news publications also opened their own bookstores, such as those run by the publishers of *El Boletín Mercantil*, *La Esperanza Puertorriqueña*—which was owned by Ramón Nolla—and *El Buscapié*, under the auspices of Manuel Fernández Juncos. *Hispano-Francesa*, the property of José Mariano Ferrer, as well as *La Ilustración Puertorriqueña* and *La Propaganda Literaria*, which were both owned by Saturnino G. de Montilla, are also worthy of mention.

Bibliophiles could soon be found in other parts of the island, most notably in the larger towns and cities. Ponce soon had various bookstores, most importantly those run by Manuel López, and Olimpo Otero Verges, as well as an establishment called *La Juventud Liberal*. Mayagüez became the home for similar businesses, including those owned by Alberto Colón, Eleuterio Balzac, Joaquín Serra and Leandro Montalvo. El Aguila was launched in the southern town of Guayama under the direction of Rodulfo Dávila Ramírez, and Yauco soon had its own purveyor of books called La Nueva Era, which was owned by Manuel Torres. This trend was seen in other municipalities as well.

An inventory, however brief or abridged, of the books offered by these establishments can prove quite enlightening and surprising to any researcher, with quantities surpassing even the most liberal calculations. From the standpoint of quality, these holdings reflect the sophistication and good judgment of the island's booksellers in the 19th century.

As a mere example, at the time the Márquez and Dalmau establishments were launched, in 1837 and 1839, respectively, these businesses offered more than 500 volumes each, reflecting a tremendous range of subjects and authors, from classical to contemporary. The literature section at Librería Dalmau, in particular, in addition to numerous classical tomes, also held works by Sir Walter Scott, Madame de Staël, Madame de Genlis, Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, James Fenimore Cooper and Ramón Mesonero Romanos. The history section included works by Plutarch, Martínez de la Rosa, Conde de Toreno, Conde de Segur, Louis-Pierre Anquetil, Hurtado de Mendoza, Moncada, Melo, Virei, Norvis, Guizot, and Thiers. In sociology, political science, economics, and law, there were works by Escriche,

Ferrer, De la Croix, Macarel, Solorzano, Machiavelli and Bentham. The store's sciences division was also filled with numerous authors.

When the José Solves bookstore was established in 1848 (not 1845 as is often erroneously claimed), its collection extended well beyond 1,000 volumes and included works by Cervantes, Arriaza, Lista, Meléndez Valdés, Quintana, Espronceda, Larra, Chateaubriand, Soulié de Morant, Dumas, Hugo, Lamartine, Michelet and Manzoni. A glance at the catalogues for the establishments run by González, El Boletín, Nolla and Furnagueras, reflect collections that were also quite considerable and continuously expanding.

In view of these facts, and with due respect for historical veracity, it would seem clear that the claims of Manuel Fernández Juncos were quite exaggerated when he states that "even by 1840," i.e. by the time the Márquez and Dalmau establishments were already fully operating, "there were no bookstores in this country," and that:

"Those who had a fondness for literature were forced to satisfy their desire for learning with shoddy editions or volumes borrowed from young people returning from universities abroad."

Similarly unfounded are the complaints lodged by Sotero Figueroa, who states that "by 1850" – when the businesses run by González, Gimbernat and Solves had also been added to the list of bookstores operating on the island – "finding a good book in Puerto Rico was a major triumph," and that "the trend toward amassing books, not as it was [evidenced] in Europe, but [to the lesser extent one found] in Spain, was utterly unknown in this colony." It would seem likewise necessary, once again in our respect for historical truth, to disregard the claims vented by Carlos Peñaranda that in 1885 "Spanish books on the island amounted to little more than articles of contraband." This at a time when some of Puerto Rico's greatest bookstores were at the height of their glory. It seems obvious that such intentionally outlandish and exaggerated statements, rather than reflecting any sense of reality, were aimed at pushing the authorities to adopt legislation that was more favorable and open to expanding the book trade.

Given the more advantageous conditions that marked the 19th century, the works found in the island's bookstores would begin to serve as a far greater cultural stimulus than the scant offerings of the 16th through the 18th centuries. They were also far more representative of the literary culture of the times, reflecting the latest trends of Europe and the Americas.

Puerto Rico's own literary tradition was in great part also forged by the influences of classical Latin and Spanish authors, whose works could be found in bookstores throughout the island. In 1837, the Márquez bookstore advertised the sale of works by Horace, Ovid, Virgil, and Quintilian, as well as by Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Garcilaso and Herrera. In 1848, the González establishment offered works by Seneca and Timon, Saint Teresa of Ávila, and Fray Luis de León. By 1872, the Acosta bookstore published an advertisement for the works of Quevedo, Tirso de Molina, Góngora, Vélez de Guevara, Alarcón, Rojas, Téllez, and Moreto, as well as titles by Cicero, Tacitus, Suetonius, Lucan, Titus Livius, Pliny, Martial, Tibullus, and Juvenal. As Victoriano Sardou would proclaim, these works "forever established the rules governing good taste, temperance and sober eloquence," thus being particularly influential and favored by the island's own neoclassicists, such as José Gualberto Padilla, José María Monge and Julio Padilla Iguina.

The predilection for romanticism, which by 1835 had taken Spain by storm with the publication of *Don Alvaro* by the Duque de Rivas, and Larra's essays on literature, also spread to Puerto Rico as a result of the great volume of works made available at the time through the island's bookstores. On August 17, 1839, the *Boletín Instructivo y Mercantil de*

Puerto Rico featured an article whose author finds that he has come to terms with his Romantic conversion, replacing in his personal library works by Feijó, Saavedra and Padre Scio with those by Soulié de Morant, Dumas, Victor Hugo, and García Gutiérrez. During this same period, Dalmau announced the sale of works by Scott, Madame de Staël, Silvio Pellico, and Mesonero Romanos. A short time later, the Gimbernat bookstore advertised the sale of titles by Mora, Mauri and the Duque de Rivas, while the Librería del Boletín began offering Zorrilla, Gil y Zárate, and Campoamor.

The Solves establishment followed suit with a catalogue including Chateaubriand, Martínez de la Rosa, Ochoa, Dumas, Manzoni and Larra, while Márquez advertised Quintana, Lamartine and Young. The trend continued with the Ramos bookstore offering works by Rousseau, Constant, Musset, and Byron, while Furnagueras advertised Bécquer, Baralt, Lozano, Selgas, and Núñez de Arce, and La Prensa specializing in the great works of Goethe, Hoffmann, and Edgar Allan Poe. Soon an environment propitious to the nurturing of romanticism took hold in Puerto Rico, which was soon reflected in the works produced by Martín Travieso Rivera, Alejandro Tapia Rivera, Manuel Alonso Pacheco, José Gautier Benítez, Salvador Brau Asencio, Luis Muñoz Rivera, Francisco Gonzalo Marín, and Vicente Palés Anés.

The realist movement was fostered by a range of writers including Balzac, Cecilia Böhl (Fernán Caballero)—who resided on the island during her youth—Benito Pérez Galdós, who served as Spanish parliamentary deputy for Puerto Rico, José María Pereda, and Emilia Pardo Bazán. The influence of these authors, who were broadly disseminated through bookstores and news publications, thus establishing the foundations for a romantic school on the island, is evidenced in the writings of such renowned Puerto Ricans writers as Federico Degetau González, Francisco del Valle Atilas, Ana Roque and Carmela Eulate Sanjurjo.

A naturalist trend began to form through the influence of Zola, whose novels *L'Assommoir*, *Thérèse Raquin*, *Nana*, and other works circulated through the island's bookstores, would provide a model for Puerto Rico's most renowned adherents to this school, such as Juan Braschi, Matías González García, and Manuel Zeno Gandía, the latter of whom would use one of Emile Zola's maxims as a central theme to his novel *La Charca*. Modernism also began to coalesce as an important literary trend in Puerto Rican literature as early as the 1890s.

By this time, various newspapers would publish the works of Rubén Darío, who while touring the United States made a stop in San Juan in 1892. After Darío paid a visit to the *El Buscapié* publishing house, he toured the city in the company of Manuel Fernández Juncos, then director of the prestigious and popular weekly, which had already been printing compositions in verse and prose by the great Nicaraguan poet. In 1890 alone, *El Buscapié* had included Darío's poems "Claro de Luna", "La Ninfa", "Un Marco Humilde para un Lienzo de Oro", "El Palacio del Sol", "Leticia, Arranques", "A una Estrella" and "El Sático Sordo". In 1894, "Sor Filomena", and in 1895, "La Isla de la Muerte" would appear in this publication.

In 1892, Darío's poems would also be prominently displayed in *El Clamor del País*, then under the direction of Salvador Brau Asencio. Compositions by the renowned poet appearing in this publication included "Abrojos", "En un Album", "Rima", "Lieder", "Sonetitos", "Sinfonía en Gris Mayor", "Pobre Almirante", "Otra" and "Rosas Andinas". *Revista Puertorriqueña*, which was also run by Fernández Juncos, also published Darío's "La Risa" in 1892, and "Primaveral" the following year.

In 1893, *La Democracia*, a newspaper under the direction of Muñoz Rivera, would publish "Abrojos", "Rimas", "Canciones de España", "El Centenario", "Blasón" y "Semblanza de Campoamor". Appearing that same year in this newspaper was Darío's short story *El Velo de la Reina Mab*. In 1894, *La Democracia* also included "El Paso del Sol" (an homage to

the Puerto Rican pianist Ana Otero), and "La Sobremesa". In 1895, "Fragmento". In 1897, "La Muerte de Salomé", " Febea", and "El árbol del Rey David". Finally, in 1898, "Las Lágrimas del Cantauero" and "Rima" were featured in Muñoz Rivera's publication.

El Liberal, a publication organized by Rosendo Rivera Colón and José de Diego, would publish "Autumnal" in 1898.

Rubén Darío quickly became engraved in the minds and imaginations of Puerto Rico's great men and women of letters. The Nicaraguan poet would be similarly affected by his own memories of the island.

In a chronical published in *La Democracia* on June 7, 1893, Demetrio Gil writes:

"The name of Rubén Darío certainly received due consideration from Puerto Rico's literary notables. His fame as a writer of poetry and prose illustrates how well known he was in the Americas and Europe. Whoever in my country has not read something worthy, sweet and tender from the young writers of the Andes, [has at least] enjoyed the genius of his celestial pen and lyre."

In 1893, Ferdinand R. Cestero published a sonnet eulogizing Rubén Darío in the journal *La Ilustración Puertorriqueña*, which was eventually linked to the poet's death in a newspaper in Costa Rica. Thus, the director of *El Buscapié*, writing in February of 1895, would state: "We can only hope that such sad news is not confirmed." When the falsehood of this rumor was finally verified, the director of *La Democracia* offered this comment: "The news that the original poet Rubén Darío died in Buenos Aires has been duly discredited. This information is highly auspicious for Spanish letters." When Darío first began publishing *La Revista Americana* in 1894, the poet included an homage to Manuel Fernández Juncos—which is also highly evocative of the island of Puerto Rico—on the occasion of Juncos' publication of the third edition of *Tipos and Caracteres Puertorriqueños*.

Numerous reprints continued to appear in the island's newspapers and periodicals of other works by seminal figures in the modernist movement, such as Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, Julián del Casal, Salvador Díaz Mirón and José Santos Chocano. Many translations were also made in Puerto Rico of prose and verse compositions by the most distinguished members of the French avant-garde.

In this sense, the island's literary culture is the product of a confluence of relationships and elements not only from Spain, but from other nations in Europe and the Americas. As with Puerto Rico's culture as a whole, this fusion of divergent sources places it firmly within the evolving intellectual history of the Western world, while still maintaining very unique traits, which first begin to concretely take shape in the 19th century.

In conclusion, this is merely an initial consideration of the intrinsic value of Puerto Rico's culture, and more specifically of its literary culture. At this juncture, we have neither the time nor the space to truly justify such an enterprise. At some future point, should we endeavor to embark on such a task, we should keep in mind the words of Gréard, who in his magnificent preface to Loliée's *Short History of Comparative Literature* states:

"Civilization is not the exclusive work of any single people, and if some have contributed to it with greater power or brilliance, all, even the least renowned, have played their own useful and beneficial role. For those who by dint of sheer snobbery and ignorance maintain that the island of Puerto Rico remained buried far too long in the shadows, I wish to offer these words by Salvador Brau Asencio: "Those in our country who take pride in completely disowning the past must not have spent much time studying it."

This much is true. To be a good Puerto Rican, one must know Puerto Rico, love Puerto Rico, and serve Puerto Rico. One cannot truly love without knowing, just as one cannot serve with devotion what one neither knows nor loves.