



Cuban Public Libraries for an environmental culture in the community. Its influence in children and young people

Lic. **Maricela Corvo de Armas**
Municipal Library San Antonio de los Baños
Havana, Cuba

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In recent years, the theme about the environment has collected an unexpected prosperity, that is justified for the increasing awareness of the role that it has in human welfare.

“An important biological specie is in risk to disappear for the fast and progressive liquidation of his natural conditions of life: The man ” (1).

The climatic change represents an increasing threat for the man's health and it is necessary to combat it for the happiness of the planet. Its consequences will be irreversible in proximate decades.

On June 5, 1972, for the first time over 180 countries met to analyze the environmental worldwide situation. In this lecture celebrated in Stockholm they decided to create the Program of United Nations for the environment, approved later for the UN'S General Meeting, with the intention to be a catalyst for the instrumentation and coordination of worldwide protective policies of the environment. It was for those reasons that was established on June 5 the day of the word environment.

In another important forums the environmental present-day problems have been discussed.

The General Meeting of the UN proclaimed on September 16, 1987 like the Internacional Day of the Preservation of ozone layer, date in that Montreal's Protocol, relative to exhausting substances of that fine cover that is between to a height 25 and 40 kilometers of the terrestrial surface that constitutes a solid defense against the powerful flow of ultraviolet rays that arrive from the Sun.

In 1997 in the third Meeting of the Marco Convention about the Climatic Change, it was approved the Protocol of Kyoto, an agreement that establishes that developed countries must reduce his emissions of gases of greenhouse effect in a 5,2 % for the year 2012 in relation to the emissions of the year 1990.

The solution of serious environmental problems like the depletion of natural resources because of the uncontrolled economic exploitation, the deterioration of the quality of our atmosphere and our waters as a consequence of the industrial development badly planned, in short, the degradation of the environmental due to the human action has to be solved for the sake of our own survival.

In Cuba from 1959 the first steps were given to orchestrate the control and the preservation of the natural patrimony. But since the United Nations' lecture on Environment and Development celebrated in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, our country gave concrete steps to practice the political will of the government to transit for a sustainable development. As substantial action we have to mention the modification of the Article 27 of the Constitution of the Republic, by agreement of the Parliament: "The State protects the environmental and Natural Resources of the country and recognizes the narrow linkage with the sustainable economic and social development, to make more rational the human life and assuring the survival, the welfare the security of present-day and future generations".(2)

PUBLIC LIBRARIES CUBANAS AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

The Library like motor of knowledge and hulling by pounding of cultural development of the community must satisfy the formative and informative needs of the place that one inserts in and surpassing offer information and of the loan of documents. What it should for integrate of direct form with the population and influencing the conduct and in the enlargement of the thoughts of these people.

The Library, play a very important role in people's education when complementing of its community; From there the value and the need of local cooperation, national and international to preserve and to resolve the environmental problems.

Environmental education is a permanent process that gets for itself the acquisition of knowledge and development of qualifications and moral values for the understanding of the contemporary environmental problems.

In first instance must be developed by the family, community and society and conceiving within the learning plans for the important that is to feel love for nature from early ages.

Publics Libraries like Educational Institutions, they make an interchange with communities where they insert themselves, so they can sensitize the people with care and preservation of the surroundings.

Many children and young people maintain unconscious attitudes in respect of these themes, because many times the education limits itself to the exclusive problems of the subjects of study that they take a course at schools, for that parents and teachers without proposing it forget to motivate the little boy in order that he take care for the surroundings.

The books and Libraries constitute valuable instruments to promote the understanding on care and the preservation of the environmental, because they offer great number of users services and work with different peoples of different ages and professions.

The Library is a privilege place of communication and interchange where born the cultural environment and the participation becomes reality as a whole, stimulating the universal thought and creator with the continuum rescue of environmental moral values, natives or constructed.

The City Library of San Antonio de los Baños, Havana, Cuba, can show an experience in this sense that has had a great success, the Cultural Project for children and young people **Love the Nature** in coordination with the Martiano Forest of the municipality that takes its name in tribute of our Nacional Heroe José Martí, eternal defender of nature.

San Antonio de los Baños's Referent Stories

San Antonio de los Baños's Village was founded the September 22, 1794. With a surface of 126 square kilometers and 46289 habitants, it treasures a bicentennial history.

Declared like a Natural Protected Place, there is the Ariguanabo River of 188 Kilometers squared spanning, one comes from the more important for water supply at the Havana's City.

The River cross the city and around it we find a forest – the humid gallery that he offers shelters an ecosystem that he represents the 5 % of the biodiversity of the flora and the fauna that can find oneself in the island of Cuba some more.

Over 200 vegetable species, some endemic at the island, and animals's about 15 species, among them 5 arachnids's families that can not find in no other the planet's place, enjoy meetings and thanks to the River Ariguanabo.

San Antonio de los Baños, it is a fertile plain where a high-quality tobacco that guarantees great part of the production of Havana Cigars of the country is obtained. Although he does not figure as destiny once the more important at that side of the Atlantic and to maintain, in spite of blockages was recommended in guidebooks on the island of Cuba, a municipality known in the world is to be headquarters of Cinema and Television Internacional School, and another scarcities, a cultural first-rate activity.

In San Antonio de los Baños, as on all the localities of Cuba, there is an active cultural life, teachers and an infrastructure of health of mode that there is no resident without medical attention.

HEALTH.

The municipality has a net of Medical Consultories that gives help to five municipalities of the Province Havana in Medicine General Integral for primary attention at each neighborhood and a Hospital Territorial, Pediatrics, Obstetrics, Gynaecology, Surgery, Neonatology, Orthopedics, Medicine Legal, Maxilofacial. In addition it has a Medicine and Nurses school, a Blood Bank, Mother's Home, Grandparents's House (first of his type at the country, inaugurated in 1973), the Estomatologic Clinic, among others.

EDUCATION AND CULTURE.

The education, just as health is another important stronghold in the revolutionary process. San Antonio de los Baños has 39 centers and over 600 teachers and professors, where pupils in distinct tuitional levels, including 10000 of internal students of the Havana City. The above information makes our municipality to be considered the one of the highest educative paver in the country.

We have in the Municipality a Provincial Academy of Plastic Arts and Instructors' Provincial School, where they get ready close to 400 pupils like instructors' and future plastic artists, a Vocational Institute of Exact Science and a Vocational Padagogical Institute.

An artistic and literary culture in San Antonio de los Baños is characterized by a Program Sociocultural Development for the spiritual village enrichment: the Municipal Museum, the only International Museum of Humor in Cuba and in Latin America, the house of Culture, the City Library, the Art Gallery and the Ariguanabo radio broadcast. Of great relevance is the International Cinema and Television School, founded in 1986 where the specialists from different branches of the seventh arts are prepared.

The most outstanding act of San Antonio de los Baños culture is the unexpected development of grafic humor in Cuba to have a rich humoristic popular tradition and having been born in this municipality. The most important Cuban cartoonists reasons by which San Antonio is the place of International Humor Festival every two years.

San Antonio de los Baños and the environment

Also the environmental impoverishment is reverted in San Antonio de los Baños and the people that have stood out for his extraordinary love to nature, to his protection, and to promote the validity of the martiano's thought.

For several years, the idea to create a Forest in honor to José Martí was lively in the mind of the mister Rafael Rodrigues Ortiz, scholar and divulger of the work of our Nacional Heroe.

After grand efforts it was been able to get a piece of land at outskirts from the municipality that had been drain in San Antonio de los Baños and that was between two lagoons of oxidation. It was worked up strongly and with all the respect that he requires a work of this magnitude with the support of the Government of the PCC of the CITMA of the Botanical Gardens of all of the lovers of nature,,,,, and the old wish came true and from May 19, 1994 it rises in what was the drain, the Martiano Forest, nowadays surrounded of two lagoons where aquatic life exists . The 54 sorts of trees and bushes that Martí mentioned in his memories of the war grow at the Forest. He is notable institution at our country and referential Center of the Ministry of Agriculture. The Forest is visited by national and international personalities
Another one of the objectives of the Forest was to fill it with historic valuables, many places where they remind doings of great relevance in the history to Cuba exist in it.

Eternal loving, José Martí, of nature and defender expressed :

“ The Nature inspires, cure, consoles, strengthens and trains for virtue the man. And the man does not feel himself complete, neither it rises to oneself neither see the invisible, if not in his intimate relation with nature ” The forest makes happy Like a good action. “ The forest goes back to the man to the reason and to faith and the eternal youth” (3)

THE LIBRARY AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO CONFRONT THE ENVIRONMENTAL PRESENT-DAY CRISIS.

San Antonio de los Baños's Territorial Library has designed and applied cultural the Project **Martí and Nature** in coordination with the Martiano Forest with the future construction of a Library within the Forest with books specialized in the subject matter. The results have been of a great success.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT.

- Wake up the interest for the care of nature and environment since early years.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Divulging the Martí's ideas validity.
Demonstrating the love that Martí for nature was feeling .

Promoting the environmental education at the locality.
Forming an environmental culture in the community.
Instructing on historic moral values.
Stimulating the habit for the reading in children and young people through these themes.
Highlighting the paper of the library like catalyst of potentialities in the Community.

Characteristics of the Project.

Through a selection of themes on the care of nature, distinct cycles of conferences and chats on these themes about environmental and nature and the love Martí was feeling for it have been carried out in different Elementary Schools and high schools of the Municipality. These cycles have a duration of four months and they give themselves once a week. When they finalizing accomplishes a contest of paint with the title “Care our surroundings” and better works are rewarded.

In the celebration of given events commemorated on the same day on the history of Cuba, they adapt for the stage these doings for children and young people in the Martiano Forest.

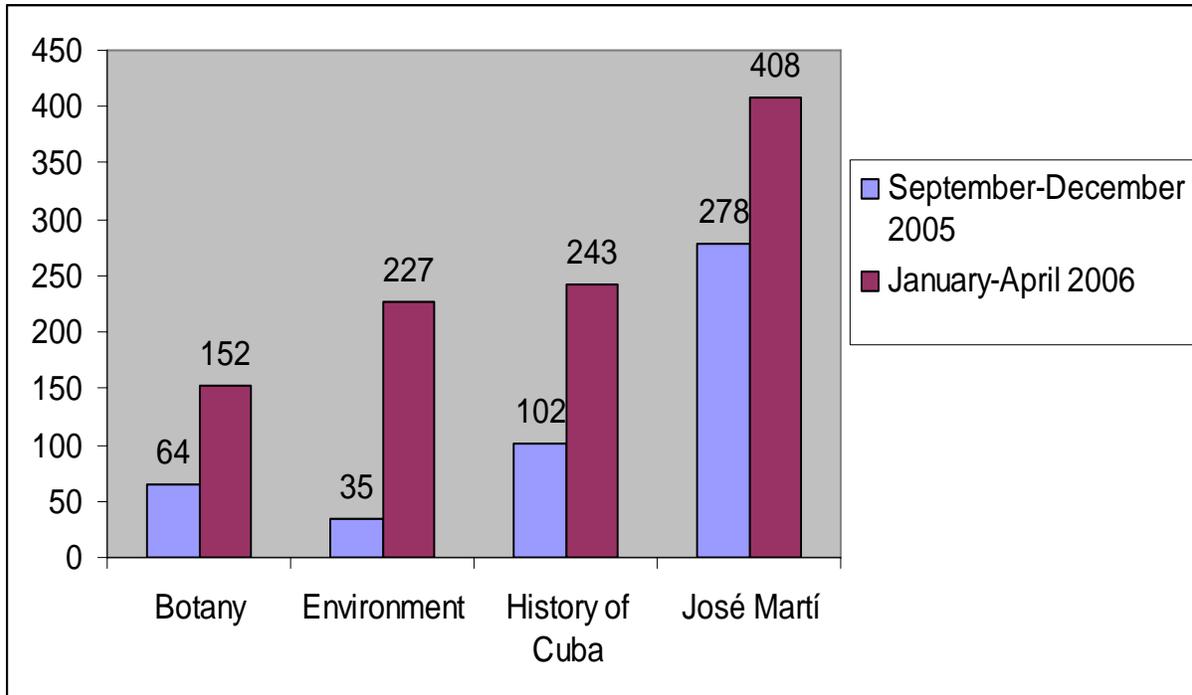
REALIZED ACTIONS.

- Chat and conversations at the Library, elementary schools and secondary schools of the municipality on nature, the environment and the validity of the Martiano thoughts.
- Guided visits the Martiano Forest.
- Talking with experts of the municipality on the subject of the environment.
- Contest of Paint “Let's Take Care Of Our Surroundings”.
- Staging of historic doings in the Martiano Forest.
- Several groups of children debating about these themes at the Library.
- Creation of groups with the pupils of the Project for the cleaning of the River and the Forest.
- Formation of groups of children and young people for zones of residence to guide the neighbors on environmental adequate conducts.
- Lectures by for specialists of Health for children, young people and other interested groups in knowing on different subject matters related with the prevention of diseases originated as from micro drains and residual waters.
- Chats in the Martiano Forest for specialists that they discuss the care of the ground and reforestation.

RESULTS.

- The questions accomplished by children and young people at schools visited, an increasing interest and worry for the environmental status denote, thus for the validity of the martiano thought.
- The transformation for an embellished and happy surroundings could be observed in visits accomplished by the pupils of the Project to zones with environmental deterioration.
- It was achieved the decontamination of a great part of the River.
- We could get the cleanliness of some streets and parks of the city.
- A bigger request of books related with the environment, Daily Newspaper José Martí, dairy Botany and History of Cuba have been detected at the Library.
- The interest to visit the Martiano Forest and the Library, as well as knowing the distinct varieties of trees named by Martí in his diary has grown .
- The Library elaborated a Record dynamic Information and varied with principal problems national, international environmental and premiseses, documents than make him easy to the students to back up his knowledge in the themes of classrooms.
- The assistant public to distinct specialists's lectures multiple knowledge at another scenes.
- The social consciousness-raising from part of the children and young people about the care of the surroundings evidenced in a bigger worry by the contamination of nature notably. Our Library's bottom was examined in order to conceive this proposal and were utilized: 7 books on the environment, 8 of Botany, 6 of History of Cuba and 9 of José Martí.
- In a brief comparative analysis among children and young people that visited the library 4 months before being applied the project (September December 2005) and 4 months after of applied (January April 2006), we obtained following.
- In the first four month period 523 users attended children and adolescent library room and in the second four month period 914.

Likewise, the behavior of the requests of books about Botany, environment, History of Cuba and José Martí was increased:



Some children's and jóvenes's opinions after three months of once the projet was applied.

- I do not longer throw trashes at the River because this contaminates its waters.
- I do not scratch the trunk of trees to record names because he does too much damage.
- I do not hurt the animals because they also have a right to life.
- Not pull out the flowers of parks and the gardens.
- We have achieved that neighbors not throw Río trashes.
- I reprehend my friends and neighbors when they do something that he damage the nature.
- I have achieved that my neighborhood be happy and nice.

CONCLUSIONS.

- An environmental culture since early years has been able to create and it is demonstrated in the grade of worry and consciousness-raising acquired by these children and young people for the care of nature and the environment due to the Project.
- We achieved a change of conduct in neighbors with unconscious attitudes with regard to this matter.
- Children's visits and young people to the Library increased and the habit for the reading as from knowledge on nature in touch with the environment, because reading a book below a tree on Botany or pertaining to the subject matter is something innovative that he stimulates the student.
- It was been able to promote an environmental education in the community.
- The environmental culture in the locality was promoted.
- In the realization of this Project we found into an only reality, the past dreamt by Martí, the care of nature, the present, needy of a bigger social consciousness-raising and the effort for environmental decontamination, and the future for the welfare of everybody in the community.

- The experience besides constitutes a vigorous seed and example to follow all around the country, not only like an expression of will to take care of the environment , but also to express the historic memory through events represented at the Forest and divulging the validity of martiano diary.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

The genesis of the Martiano Forest, harmonic integration among our Nacional Heroe and the environmental politic that the Revolución develops, strengthened in recent times, he must not be left like an original and exclusive patrimony of San Antonio de los Baños, Havana Cuba. From the place that we are settled we can contribute to preserve the environmet, because big dangers are present and put in risk the human specie. Children and present-day young people will be the men of the future so that these are the beginning of the straight and good path.

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