

# Fuentes y enfoques del periodismo de José Martí en el mensuario

## *La América*



**Alejandro Herrera Moreno**

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# El glosógrafo

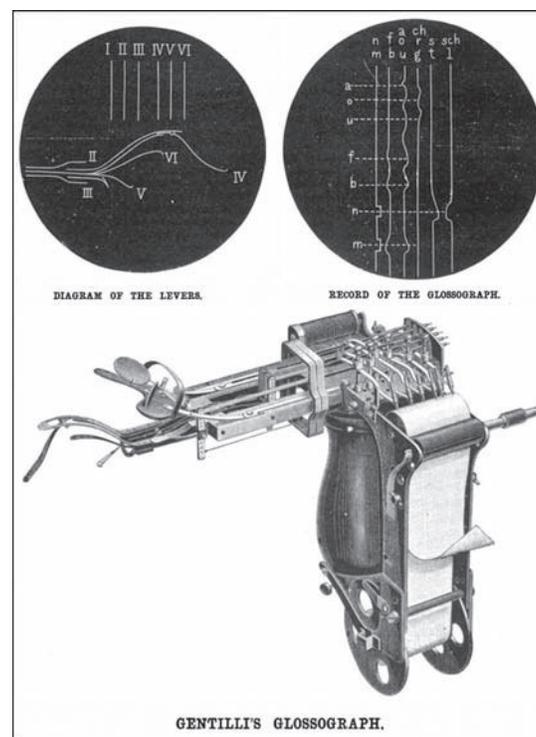
En *La América* de noviembre de 1883 presenta José Martí “El glosógrafo”<sup>1</sup>, un invento del ingeniero austriaco Amadeo Gentili en el ámbito de la comunicación. Pero antes de entrar en los detalles técnicos de una invención de tan extraño nombre, anuncia como poeta, más que como periodista, lo que el glosógrafo parece prometer a los protagonistas del proceso de la creación poética:

Ya parece inventado, el instrumento desde tanto tiempo hace apetecido por los pensadores de mente volcánica, y por los poetas de veras, a quienes suelen venir las ideas en bandadas compactas y fugaces, y como en haces de relámpagos. Dicen los tales que las ideas les vienen a veces, luego de estarse quedos mucho tiempo, como si fueran ejércitos de mariposas, que les baten las sienas con las alas, y les rozan los labios, como llamando a ellos las palabras que las pinten, palabras que jamás lleguen con rapidez bastante para colorear sobre el papel las inquietas y atropelladas mariposas.<sup>2</sup>

Más adelante, Martí menciona al diario londinense *Pall Mall Gazette* como fuente de su información, y encontramos que, efectivamente, en su número de septiembre de 1883 se informa sobre este invento en un extenso reportaje titulado “A new electrical miracle”.<sup>3</sup> Sin embargo, Martí no empleó para su reportaje el contenido del propio diario londinense, sino que lo construyó a partir de una reseña más corta, que había aparecido en varios periódicos norteamericanos entre septiembre y noviembre de 1883, bajo el título “The glossograph”<sup>4</sup> y que aluden al periódico británico como fuente. Cabe añadir que el *Scientific American* de junio de 1882 dedicó un reportaje al glosógrafo con cuatro figuras<sup>5</sup> (de las cuales presentamos un ejemplo en esta página) que también puede haber tenido Martí como información general.

La comparación de textos revela las semejanzas entre ambas versiones. El texto de la prensa empieza diciendo: “One of the most interesting exhibits at the Vienna Electrical Exhibition is Gentilli’s glossograph...”<sup>6</sup> y Martí libremente traduce: “Un Gentilli —que merece su nombre— ha inventado el glosógrafo, —y lo ha exhibido en la Exposición de Electricidad de Viena”.<sup>7</sup>

**“El glosógrafo es un aparato ingeniosísimo, que puesto en lo interior de la boca, a la que se acomoda sin trabajo, no impide el habla, y la reproduce sobre el papel con perfección de escribiente del siglo XV”.**



Hay coincidencias en el nombre del invento, el sitio de su exhibición y el apellido del autor, con el cual, por cierto, Martí hace un juego de palabras que expresa su simpatía por el inventor. Seguidamente, toma información de varias partes de su fuente y hace un resumen del invento:

El glosógrafo es un aparatillo ingeniosísimo, que puesto en lo interior de la boca, a la que se acomoda sin trabajo, no impide el habla, y la reproduce sobre el papel con perfección de escribiente del siglo XV. Solo exige que se pronuncie con toda claridad; y cada sílaba, al punto que es pronunciada, ya es colocada sobre el papel que la espera, sin molestia alguna para el que habla; y sin confusión para el que lee, una vez que aprende la correspondencia de los nuevos signos.<sup>8</sup>

En lo que continúa, como se observa en el cuadro, Martí alude al *Pall Mall Gazette* y toma la idea de la dificultad del cifrado de los caracteres que da el glosógrafo. Al traducir libremente, cambia la entonación hacia un lenguaje admirativo y añade una nota de reconocimiento al periódico londinense, a la vez que introduce el ejemplo de la escritura musical en comparación con la del glosógrafo.

#### José Martí

"¡Qué alegría, sí, como dice el *Pall Mall Gazette*, que ya se sabe que es periódico de gran respeto, no hubiera en el nuevo aparato más dificultad que la de descifrar los caracteres! Más claros que los de la música han de ser, y no más difíciles que ellos,—y los de la música se leen de corrido".—[p. 209]

#### Prensa norteamericana

"The chief obstacle to the introduction of the glossograph, says the *Pall Mall Gazette*, will be the difficulty in deciphering the characters [...] The orthography would doubtless appear strange, but in these days of phonetic spelling this might not long be a hindrance".

Seguidamente, reaparece el poeta, la descripción técnica se interrumpe de golpe y nos ofrece esta exaltada disertación, donde expresa su aprobación y sus dudas en torno a la utilidad real del invento en el proceso creativo, cuestión con la cual había comenzado su reportaje:

—¡Nunca, nunca llegará la mano rápida a reproducir los escarceos, carreras, súbitas paradas, inesperados arranques, hinchamientos de ola y revelamientos de corcel del pensamiento enardecido! ¡Sea bienhadado el inventor del glosógrafo! -Solo que sienta mal al pensamiento toda ficción y freno: y de fijo que con saber que se va a pensar, y fijarse el aparato en la boca, y prepararse para el suceso, ya se piensa menos. La inspiración es perpetua doncella. —La soledad es su amiga. El esposo que la fecunda es el silencio.<sup>9</sup>

No queremos continuar sin antes señalar que siete años después, cuando el glosógrafo ya había devenido en una invención más acabada: el fonógrafo; Martí retoma el asunto desde *El Partido Liberal* de marzo de 1890, mientras comenta el libro "Ciencia loca y sabia locura" y dice:

Hasta los poetas han empezado a mirarlo con favor; porque en las altas horas de la noche, cuando las ideas echan alas, y se tiñe la sombra de colores, y pasa una virgen llorando sobre su corazón roto, o una bayadera bebiendo champán, el poeta, que no puede perder tiempo en buscar fósforos, sacude las sábanas fogosas, palpa en la oscuridad el fonógrafo que tiene a su cabecera, habla por la trompeta al rollo que recoge sus imágenes: y a la mañana siguiente, con poner en el fonógrafo el rollo, los versos salen cantando.<sup>10</sup>

En lo que resta del reportaje, como se observa en los cuadros finales, la correspondencia entre textos en términos de ideas básicas es total. Se trata de una traducción libre en un lenguaje ameno y coloquial. El reportaje original tiene doscientas cincuenta y cuatro palabras, que en el de Martí

José Martí	Prensa norteamericana
<p>“De tal modo está construido el aparato que una vez puesto en la boca, queda en contacto con el cielo de esta, los labios y la lengua. Un registro electromagnético recibe los sonidos y los trasmite al papel. [p. 209]</p>	<p>“A small apparatus is placed in the mouth of the speaker—in contact with the roof of mouth, his tongue and lips—and on being connected with an electro-magnetic registering apparatus the sounds are committed to paper”.</p>
<p>“No se necesita—dice Gentilli—alzar la voz. Con la voz más baja se logra la más fiel reproducción. Lo que se necesita es pronunciar bien”.</p>	<p>“..neither is it necessary that the voice should be raised, as it reproduces a whisper as exactly as a shout; the only condition is a correct and distinct articulation”.</p>
<p>“Póngase de un lado—dice un comentador—el que presuma de escribir más rápidamente con la pluma, —y del otro lado el que hable con el glosógrafo. —Es seguro que este escribe con el aparato cinco veces más que el más veloz escribiente”.</p>	<p>“According to the inventor’s calculation, it will be possible to write four or five times as fast by means of the glossography as has hitherto been possible even by the quickest writer”.</p>
<p>Aunque ocurre que el glosógrafo pudiera no ser más que una mejora sobre el fonógrafo de Edison, —dícese que no, —que es de fecha mucho más antigua, y sobre descansar en otro principio acústico, no reproduce los sonidos en forma microscópica”. [p. 210]</p>	<p>“At first sight it appears as if this invention were but an improvement upon Edison’s phonograph; it is however, of a much older date. It rests, unlike the former, on an acoustic principle, and does not reproduce the sounds in a microscopical form”.</p>

se convierten en quinientas ochocientos. El tema técnico ocupa un 63% y trasmite de manera clara y entusiasta la información básica del inventor, las particularidades del aparato, su propósito y sus limitaciones. El lenguaje literario se extiende ocupando un 37% del texto, dedicado enteramente a las ventajas y desventajas del glosógrafo para los poetas. Dado que va a presentar un aparato que sirve para transmitir a un papel lo que se piensa y habla, ve Martí en él un vehículo idóneo para que puedan los poetas súbitamente inspirados atrapar las ideas que de forma repentina y atropellada vienen a su mente en el momento sublime de la inspiración. Sin embargo, reconoce que disponerse a usar tal aparato mecánico encierra un proceso de preparación consciente que bien puede interferir con la pureza y espontaneidad del proceso creativo. De ahí su poético cierre que no deja de expresar esta inconformidad: “¡Oh todo, todo podrá inventarse—menos las alas!”<sup>11</sup> Algo interesante es que ciento diecinueve años más tarde “El glosógrafo” regresó al inglés de la mano de la escritora, editora y traductora literaria norteamericana Esther Allen.<sup>12</sup>

#### Notas

1. José Martí: “El glosógrafo”, en *La América*, Nueva York, noviembre de 1883, OCEC, t. 18, pp. 209-210.
2. *Ibidem*, p. 209.
3. “A new electrical miracle”, en *Pall Mall Gazette*, London, England, septiembre 27 de 1883, pp. 11-12.
4. “The Glossograph”. *Chronicling America Historic American Newspapers 2017*. Library of Congress, USA. Disponible en: <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>
5. “Gentilli’s glossograph. An automatic short-hand apparatus”. *Scientific American*, 24 de junio de 1882, Vol. XLVI, No. 25, p. 394.
6. “The Glossograph”, *ob. cit.*
7. JM: “El glosógrafo”, *ob. cit.*, p. 209.
8. *Ídem*.
9. *Ídem*.
10. JM: Boletín de *El Partido Liberal*, en *El Partido Liberal*, México, 12 de marzo de 1890, OC, t. 13, p. 509.
11. JM: “El glosógrafo”, *ob. cit.*, p. 210.
12. JM: “The glossograph”, en *José Martí Selected Writings*, traductora E. Allen, Penguin Classics, 2002, pp. 145-146.

Battle Mountain (Austin), Fallside (Eureka), Ogden, Council Bluffs and East.

A. N. TOWNR.....General Manager  
T. H. GOODMAN.....Gen'l Pass'r and Ticket Agent  
ja9-4ntf

## Sacramento & Placerville Railroad.

On and After Wednesday, May 30, 1883.

UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE,  
Trains will run between Sacramento and Shingle Springs as follows:  
Leave Sacramento for Folsom, Latrobe and Shingle Springs..... 7:30 A. M.  
Leave Sacramento for Folsom..... 4:00 P. M.  
Leave Shingle Springs for Latrobe, Folsom and Sacramento..... 11:15 A. M.  
Leave Latrobe for Folsom and Sacramento..... 12:30 M.  
Leave Folsom for Sacramento..... 7:50 A. M.  
Leave Folsom for Sacramento..... 1:15 P. M.  
mr2-tf J. B. WRIGHT, Superintendent.

## For Portland and Astoria (Oregon).

THE OREGON RAILWAY AND Navigation Company and Pacific Coast Steamship Company will dispatch from Spear-street wharf, for the above ports, one of their New All Iron Steamships, viz:

Queen of the Pacific, Columbia, State of California and Oregon.

### SAILING DAYS:

OCTOBER. 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30.  
AND EVERY FOLLOWING THIRD DAY,

At 10 o'clock A. M.,  
Connecting at Portland, Or., with Steamers and Railroads and their connecting Stage-lines for all points in Oregon, Washington and Idaho Territories, British Columbia and Alaska.  
Ticket Office: No. 214 Montgomery street.  
GOODALL, PERKINS & CO., Agents,  
my2-tf No. 10 Market street, San Francisco.

## OCEANIC STEAMSHIP COMPANY.

### FOR HONOLULU.

THE SPLENDID NEW 3,000-TON steamships will leave the Company's Wharf, corner Steuart and Harrison streets, at 3 P. M.:

MARIPOSA.....NOVEMBER 1st.  
ALAMEDA.....NOVEMBER 15th.

### Freight, 84 Per Ton.

Excursion Tickets at Reduced Rates. For passage or further particulars, apply to J. D. SPRECKELS & BROS., Agents, 327 Market street, corner Fremont.  
o18-tf

## WATERHOUSE & LESTER,

—IMPORTERS OF—

## WAGON LUMBER AND CARRIAGE TRIMMINGS,

Nos. 708 and 710 J street,.....Sacramento.  
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## LADIES USE ONLY French Dressing & Satin Polish ON YOUR BOOTS AND SHOES.

Every bottle has Paris Medal on it.

Beware of Imitations.

B. E. BROWN & CO., Boston, Mass

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### MYERS & BARBER,

DEALERS IN HAY, GRAIN AND MILL FEED  
Northeast Cor. Eleventh and J sts.,  
SACRAMENTO, CAL. o11-1ptf

and in consequence of this information the detectives went to Reno, Nev., where one of the robbers was captured on Sunday last. On the following Monday Captain Aull found the second highwayman in Wadsworth, Nev. Upon searching the offenders the missing gold dust, jewelry and documents stolen from Wells, Fargo & Co.'s treasure box were recovered, and an entire confession made by the accused. One of the parties is an old offender and says that this is the fifth time he has operated as a hold road agent, and that the last exploit with the driver, G. J. Buxon, was the easiest job of the lot. They are being taken to Downville for arraignment. They waived all rights of a requisition. It is almost an established fact that one of them was engaged in the robbery of the Sierra Valley stage, about two months ago. About \$400 worth of jewelry, gold dust and amalgam were recovered.

### Verdict of Simple Assault.

SALINAS, October 25th.—The jury in the Leary trial brought in a verdict last night at 10 o'clock of simple assault, which surprised everyone, as Leary was either guilty as charged or entirely innocent. This verdict is equivalent to an acquittal, as the sentence cannot be more than three months' imprisonment in the county jail, which he can dispose of while serving out his present sentence.

### A Fatal Accident.

SURANVILLE, October 25th.—A. S. Wright, an old resident of this valley, was thrown from his buggy by his horse becoming unmanageable, last Saturday, receiving wounds from which he died last night, and was buried by the A. O. U. W. to-day, of which Order he was a member. He leaves a wife and three children.

### Affairs at Emigrant Gap.

EMIGRANT GAP, October 25th.—The cattle which have been pasturing in the mountains have about all gone to the valleys, fearing the early storms, which usually come ere this. Peaslee's large band left this morning.

The steam wagon which was intended to start tomorrow, which had been constructed to convey lumber from the mills in this vicinity, will have to lie still if the storm does not subside. The roads have been completed, and everything is in proper condition for active operation the coming summer.

### Bwilling Destroyed by Fire.

NEVADA, October 25th.—This morning a dwelling-house on Gold Flat, owned by J. H. Wentworth, and occupied by the family of O. A. Tompkins, was destroyed by fire, involving a loss of \$600. Mrs. Tompkins and one or two other members of the family were sick in bed and had to be carried out bodily. All the furniture and clothing were saved. The house was insured for \$200 in the State Investment Company.

### NEVADA.

### Attempted Incendiarism.

EUREKA, October 25th.—An attempt was made last night at 9 o'clock to fire the town. An unoccupied lodging-house in the rear of the saloon of Moore & Morrison, connected with the building on Main street, was the spot selected. Morrison, hearing the crackling of the flames, became alarmed and rushed to the rear street, where the building had an entrance, and found a can of coal oil in flames in an empty room. The skylight had been opened to give full play to the flames. He carried the flaming oil into the street, and at great risk saved the property and probably the town, as the night was windy, and a disastrous fire, if fairly started, could not have been averted. Much indignation is felt, but there is no clue as yet to the perpetrators.

### OREGON.

### Insane Patients in Their New Quarters.

SALEM, October 25th.—A special train conveying the female insane patients arrived at 2:30. Carriages were in waiting at the depot for the entire lot, and the transfer was made without accident. All are now safely housed in the new building, with matters running along smoothly.

### The Holladay Brothers.

PORTLAND, October 25th.—It is said that a very important suit will be instituted soon by Ben Holladay, the ex-railroad magnate of Oregon, against his brother, Joseph Holladay, for the recovery of a large amount of property. It appears that some years ago Ben Holladay borrowed a considerable sum of money from his brother. He deeded to Joseph a large amount of valuable property located in and near this city. Ben Holladay also owed a large amount of money to other persons, and his object in giving the deed to his brother was to secure him (Joseph), and at the same time save the property from falling into the hands of his numerous other

heat that leaves the skin goes to warm these superposed envelopes; it passes through them the more slowly in proportion as they are poorer conductors; reaching the surface, it escapes, but without making us feel the chills which direct contact with the atmosphere occasions, for our clothes catch the cold for us. The hairs and the feathers of animals perform the same function as toward their skin, serving to remove the seat of calorific exchange away from the body. The protection we owe to our clothes is made more effectual by their always being wadded with a stratum of warm air. Each one of us thus has his own atmosphere, which goes with him everywhere, and is renewed without being cooled. The animal also finds under its fur an additional protection in the bed of air that fills the spaces between the hairs; and it is on account of the air they inclose that porous substances, furs and feathers keep warm. Experiments to determine the degree of facility with which different substances used for clothing allow heat to escape were made by Count Rumford, Senebier, Boeckmann, James Starck and M. Coulier. The results were not in all cases consistent with each other, but they indicate that the property is dependent on the texture of the substance rather than on the kind of material, or—as concerns non-luminous heat—its color.—[M. R. Radau, in Popular Science.

THE GLOSSOGRAPH.—One of the most interesting exhibits at the Vienna Electrical Exhibition is Gentilli's glossograph, a little instrument by which speech is automatically reproduced as soon as it is uttered. A small apparatus is placed in the mouth of the speaker—in contact with the roof of the mouth, his tongue and lips—and on being connected with an electro-magnetic registering apparatus the sounds are committed to paper. It is constructed in such a manner as not to cause any inconvenience to the speaker; neither is it necessary that the voice should be raised, as it reproduces a whisper as exactly as a shout; the only condition is a correct and distinct articulation. According to the inventor's calculation, it will be possible to write four or five times as fast by means of the glossograph as has hitherto been possible even by the quickest writer. At first sight it appears as if this invention were but an improvement upon Edison's phonograph; it is, however, of a much older date. It rests, unlike the former, on an acoustic principle, and does not reproduce the sounds in a microscopical form. The chief obstacle to the introduction of the glossograph, says the *Pall Mall Gazette*, will be the difficulty in deciphering the characters, but it is not impossible that with the help of a second automatic apparatus the characters produced by the glossograph may be translated into our common type-writing. The orthography would doubtless appear strange, but in these days of phonetic spelling this might not long be a hindrance.

HORSFORD'S ACID PHOSPHATE. Unanimous approval of Medical staff. Dr. T. G. Comstock, physician at Good Samaritan Hospital, St. Louis, Mo., says: "For years we have used it in this hospital in dyspepsia and nervous diseases, and as a drink during the decline and in the convalescence of lingering fevers. It has the unanimous approval of our medical staff."