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**Julio Antonio Mella: One of the Most Influential Personalities of his Time**

By: Ariel Pazos Ortíz / Special for CubaSi  
27/03/2024



Julio Antonio Mella was a young man who clung to the course of history to try to change it. He was born on March 25, 1903 and, according to his biographies, he was registered in the civil registry as Nicanor McPartland.

His ideology summarized the most advanced political thought of the time he lived in, since, according to the illustrious historian Francisca López Civeira, he was profound follower of Martí's ideas, a convinced anti-imperialist and assumed Marxism and Leninism from a creative vision. One of his contemporaries, Juan Marinello, once said:

"Whoever saw Mella up close knew one of the most suggestive and attractive personalities that has ever inspired our land". The physical appearance suited his nature and his mission wonderfully. Very tall, athletic, with a beautiful head, strong and upright, with energetic and serene gestures at the same time, his presence responded in exact measure to his task of immediate and multiple communication.

As López Civeira has written, Mella represents "one of the most recognized symbols of the Cuban people, despite his very short life." Among other historical merits, he was the founder of the University Student Federation (FEU) in 1922; of the José Martí Popular University in 1923—which operated in the same area as the University of Havana, for the educational and political improvement of popular sectors—; and from the first Communist Party of Cuba in 1925, together with Carlos Baliño, also follower of Martí.

**Translated by Amilkal Labañino / CubaSi Translation Staff**

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