

# Bárbara's Son

*The Influence of Juan Gualberto Gómez  
on the Political and Journalistic  
Trajectory of Lino D'Ou*

Miguel Cabrera Peña  
Professor and Journalist

If a book with the best fifty pages of Nicolás Guillén's prose were published, for their weight and art, one would have to include in it those he dedicated to Lino D'Ou y Allyon. Cuban history does not delve into the story of this son of a black woman (Bárbara) and a Spanish man who was born in 1871, when the Mambí soldiers had already decreed the abolition of slavery.

His father, a member of the colonial and commercial voluntary forces, gave this young man a cultural education upon which he would build for the rest of his life. So far as we know, there is no biography of D'Ou, nor even much information on the Internet to consult.<sup>1</sup>

So, who was this mulatto, really who, with his rapid, sarcastic and grinning responses, frequently appearing in the political cartoons of *La Política Cómica* [Humorous Politics], run by the popular Ricardo de la Torriente, who managed to publish a mere

110,000 copies during the dawn of the Republic? The author of *West Indies, Ltd.* (Guillén) became concerned that D'Ou might become pigeonholed in its funny pages. But it is in the area of politics that the Camagueyan writer considers the publication "incomplete," so he soon gives him an additional "contradictory profile."

Having won a seat in the House, in 1908, D'Ou was "a conservative, electorally," with a liberal position. Every time he was asked to consider an extremely important topic, he freely shared his opinion with the press. In a nascent republic with a plethora of complexities, politicians were as much right as they were wrong, and in D'Ou's case, success or error took on much more importance than the problem itself, which characterizes most of this era's politics.

Although, after his graduation with a Bachelor of Arts and Science, the Santiagoan did not complete his legal studies at the

University of Havana. He did take an interest in things like public administration, a field in which he would become an expert. In addition, he read French and is considered a devotee of gala culture. As he was as knowledgeable in history as he was about its junctures, the press soon sought his expertise. He wrote not only for the great Havana press but also for currently unknown provincial newspapers and magazines. That is why even after the publication of two books of his articles, there is still so much misplaced material in numerous archives.

His attractive and immediately recognizable prose (because he switched the letters *y* for *i* and *g* for *j*) is a totally recommendable read, and this was not the only striking thing about him. According to Guillén, José Luciano Franco, and others, he was, above all, a master of incisive, jovial, *criollo* conversation.

A group of friends became regulars at his gatherings, which, as Franco writes, buzzed even with topics such as the Post-Modernist poetry of black intellectuals like Regino Botí and Manuel Poveda, who dominated an era of national poetry. One must recall as remarkable, that he praised this new inspiration, contrary to his mentor, Juan Gualberto Gómez, whose poetic criteria had not gotten beyond the Romanticism of Hugo and Lamartine in France, and that of Martínez de la Rosa and Núñez de Arce in his homeland. That day, right after a still unknown Poveda's talk, D'Ou amply described the same current cultural scene that was being discussed in Paris.<sup>3</sup>

Although he was from Santiago and a former Representative in the province's House, this author of the "subrogated native" is not very divorced from the Havana scene. Renowned historian Luciano Franco—by then 80 years old—remembers, with evident

nostalgia, his frequent traipses from D'Ou's participation in a literary gathering on San Lázaro Street to the bar at the Hotel Ambos Mundos, to immersing himself in historical debates. From there he would go to Obispo and San Ignacio Street, near the famous editorship of the Rambla y Bouza publishing house. Here, where congressmen and academics milled about, D'Ou would display his great talent and knowledge. The romp would end—continues Franco—in the Wilson bookstore, and after the thirties, in the Belga bookstore on O'Reilly, where he would purchase the latest magazine or book from Paris.

Eduardo Robreño puts a time to a meeting at the Rambla y Bouza publishing house, and recounts that at about five in the afternoon Juan Gualberto Gómez, who despite having founded the Republic was humble enough to travel on foot, was crossing the corner in quick and rapid steps, with an inseparable stogy in his mouth and an umbrella on his arm.

### *The influence of Juan Gualberto*

The future representative—now twenty years old and recently graduated—and an already thirty-six year old, politically savvy Juan Gualberto Gómez, must have met in about 1891. The latter had already witnessed the insurgent history of turn-of-the century France, worked as an abolitionist journalist in Madrid, founded the newspaper *La Fraternidad* [Brotherhood], in 1879, and, conspired in Cuba, against all odds, in opposition to Spain. He had also been deported and served a political prison sentence. He enjoys a solid reputation as a separatist and defender of black rights. When Martí instituted the Partido Revolucionario Cubano [The Cuban Revolutionary Party] in New

York, in 1892, Juan Gualberto would hold the most highly relevant post in the planning of the new revolt.

With regard to political and racial ideas, Lino D'Ou had before him two black leaders: Juan Gualberto Gómez and Martín Morúa Delgado. He decided to follow the first, an independence fighter who had become one of José Martí's most trusted men. As a lifetime admirer of Juan Gualberto, it was he who initiated D'Ou into the clandestine struggle against colonialism.

The person who D'Ou meets in 1891 is none other than the author of the article "¿Por qué somos separatistas? [Why are we separatists?], with which, according to General Calixto García, Juan Gualberto becomes the only Cuban with enough valor to keep his ideas in the national press. That impudence cost him an eight-month prison term, but he saw to it that the subject of emancipation could be discussed on the Island, although not mentioning any violent path to it. He, of course, defended himself to friends who called him a "systematic revolutionary" and "professional destroyer." It is probably the case that D'Ou's first encounter with journalism took place in the famous daily *La Fraternidad*, whose publication "Martí's friend," as Juan Gualberto was known, resumed upon returning from exile.

In 1895, in Guantánamo, "Barbara's son" (as D'Ou called himself to highlight his African roots) joined the rebel ranks, eventually achieving the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He was certainly the most beloved assistant of General José Maceo, who called him "four eyes," due to his constant use of eyeglasses. As a confidant of Antonio's brother, D'Ou left evidence, among many other episodes of the struggle, of the racial prejudice that existed in the heart of the rebel forces. If he had followed Morúa Delgado, his

life would have taken another turn; and he might not be remembered today. The talented Morúa needs to be further studied, to uncover facts and ambiguities about racial relations in Cuba.

### *A digression*

Also in 1892, a transcendental year in Cuban history, Gómez established the Directorio Central de las Sociedades de la Raza de Color [the Central Directory of Societies of People of Color], which was 600,000 members strong.<sup>4</sup> The organization became essential in the struggle for black people's demands. At a time that even through research is barely known to us, a "noticeable phenomenon" came about in "the struggle for civil rights."<sup>5</sup> Historian Rebecca J. Scott references the last part of the nineteenth century, in which the Directory that Juan Gualberto headed played an indispensable role. The better part of Spain's concessions, of course, were more nominal than effective.

A recent analysis calls Gómez's proposal with regard to Cuban blacks an "individualist solution," since, as the study says, he was in favor of the "salvation of Cuba through education."<sup>6</sup> The aforementioned criterion can be justified by one detail: his support of the Sociedad de Estudios Científicos y Literarios [Society for Scientific and Literary Studies]. If it is true that one can see a change in this Matancero's trajectory between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when his racial organizing work disappears, it is not only in the Directory's historic legacy but also in Juan Gualberto's actions and formulations that go beyond an "individualist solution."

Gómez and his Directory brought about the solutions of 1893 that got black children into public schools and that opened some 700 classrooms to them, which, if well consid-

ered, is far from an “individualist solution.” On the other hand, it would be hard to deny that the prior existence of the Directory facilitated the creation of the Partido Independiente de Color [Independent Party of Color], whose first nuclei were called precisely Directories. One should not forget, too, that the war implied the political participation of those who made up a majority of the army (there was no lack of detractors who tried to block the vote, like Enrique José Varona), a legacy that the Independents, many of whom were veterans of the emancipatory battles, absorbed.

Identifying Juan Gualberto with an “individual solution” regarding education—even in only a specific republican period—could invite a uncomfortable analogy with the famous Booker T. Washington, despite their very different contexts. At the end of his long career and exiled in Ghana, the wise W.E.B. Du Bois, Washington’s sharpest critic, finally had to admit the great importance of his work. It is true that Gómez understood education as a fundamental necessity for the social rise of blacks, but one must take into account, if one thinks about it, that education is an instrument of political change and power, particularly under democratic conditions.

I have no doubt whatsoever that if Washington’s fight to get more and more black people educated helped in the later struggle for civil rights, the work of the Directory as a primary support in the organization and bona-fide resistance of the Independents of Color worked in the very same way.

Just like his disciple Lino D’Ou, Juan Gualberto fought for equality with all the weapons at his disposal, something that Washington did not do. And, that battle lived on in the popular imagination. The figure of

“Martí’s friend” evoked ideas like black anti-racism and rights amongst the majority, despite his devotion to contingent politics during the twentieth century. Proof of this can be found in more than one publication that reissued articles from the most combative period of Juan Gualberto’s life—and this without forgetting his prominent column *Ideales de una Raza* [Ideals of a Race]. It was a sui generis case. Gómez’s anti-racism never lost currency, not among blacks or even many whites, because it was not forgotten. Spain was never able to say about Juan Gualberto what it thought about the racist, southern United States, according to Du Bois, with respect to Washington’s industrial education: “If that is all you and your race ask, take it.”<sup>7</sup>

With full knowledge of the fact that education did not complete the subordination of blacks, the Matancero political leader wrote about the implicit contradiction between asking blacks to get educated, to cultivate themselves, to attend institutes and universities, only to go on “living in the filthy huts, in tenement rooms, like sharecroppers.” Juan Gualberto ended by saying that if blacks united to improve their situation, whites suspected and feared that “the spirit of race [would] live on” in them.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, to say that from the nineteenth century Gómez “was of the opinion that if blacks improved themselves intellectually they would be in a position to demonstrate to whites that they had the same culture, the path to social ascension would be opened to them” is simply not accurate.<sup>9</sup> That is why a complete analogy with Booker T. Washington is not possible.

It is true that Martí articulated the extreme importance of the creation of the Directory in his article “Armonía social” [Social Harmony], in which he talks about the energetic and resolute campaign for black

social rights, and he supported those who aspired to what justly belonged to them. Martí urged “recognition for the humiliation suffered by blacks,” and advocated their “access to public places and establishments.” The politician and poet identifies racial differences as a vestige of barbarism that impeded progress and endangered peace.<sup>10</sup>

### *An anecdote with José Maceo and response to Marinello*

One of D’Ou’s first steps, under Juan Gualberto’s influence, was to join the Central Directory via the Casino Cubano, an all mulatto, Santiago organization. A separation such as this, according to the shade of one’s skin, was an interesting phenomenon that showed the contours and complexities of prejudice. This did not create in Cuba the open wound it did in Haiti, which should not obscure the fact that many mulattos did—and always have—made heroic efforts to pass for whites. The intellectual Gómez would not take long to realize the division these separate entities constituted in the struggle for all blacks’ rights.

So far as we know, D’Ou did not suffer discrimination at the hands of his compatriots in the war, precisely because he fought under General José Maceo. Yet it was also this general who opened his eyes to the reality of it. Barbara’s son tells that he and Lico Bergues, “the most intelligent and civilized Oriental mulatto of the twenty years prior to 1895,” asked Antonio Maceo’s brother to accept the very educated José Wenceslao de las Cuevas into his troop, as another assistant. His response was to say: “It is so obvious that you do not know war or life...! I know of the valor of Cuevas, but I want no more colored men at my side than those that I already have.

One needs to have an intimate knowledge of war.”<sup>11</sup>

This answer was extremely revelatory, because up until that moment, D’Ou had not noticed that among José assistants there were eleven whites and only three mulattos “who looked white.”<sup>12</sup> This sort of asymmetry can and did happen, in a majority black army, a fact upon which writers of many political hues agree and about which there are testimonies such as that of the former president of the Republic-in-Arms, Salvador Cisneros Betancourt.<sup>13</sup> José Maceo thought that by maintaining that ratio he was protecting himself from the kind of racist malice of which he had already been and would be victim. The aggressors were both in the highest civilian posts and the rebel leadership, and they pushed the great warrior to resign from his military charge. General José’s experience became an example that D’Ou would later know how to exploit.

Sensitive as he was for these themes, which filled his prose as well as his verse, Guillén assures us that Lino D’Ou could have passed for white, one of those whites the poet calls “obstinate whites, with a bit of abnegation and some snubbing.” But the ex-Mambí did not hide the truth about his race and was not interested in the fruits he might reap if he pretended to have hegemony’s skin coloring.

One of his best articles could serve to illustrate how D’Ou assumed his racial and cultural identity. In a piece written for the column “Ideales de una raza,” in the *Diario de la Marina*, as a response to a question by Juan Marinello, who could not yet accept the excellent prologuer of *Martí y los negros*, D’Ou goes on to write: “I firmly believe that the problem is not properly presented by Marinello,” and then, “[It] is not about the persistence of blacks but rather about prejudice.” And, he “amiably” left racial fusion, that

is, what some thought of as “obligatory fusion in the white torrent,” to nature.<sup>14</sup>

What the poet and author of “Liberación” [Liberation], who was about to become a lamentable essayist on the subject of Martí and Lenin, asked was whether or not blacks were interested in the permanence of their values. Notwithstanding, in time, Marinello would put his name to some of the most seductive prose in our language, a handful of essential essays about Martí. But, in addition to reiterating his joy, satisfaction and even pride in being black, D’Ou highlights: “Intensive fusion, education, the idea of justice and equity erase not our inferiority but prejudice.” He adds that black inferiority is not “about race but class.”<sup>15</sup>

Then, he immediately confesses something to which few would or will dare:

“Of all my aspirations, and my feelings, the magnitude and freedom of my country was the greatest for me, but I confess that above even that, above everything I love has always been my devotion to the black woman Barbara. Wouldn’t I have had to deny and even reject her to become part of the white torrent? Not that. Never. Always, always. Son of Barbara.”

And that is what he titled his response to Marinello. Perhaps the ex-congressman recalled Martí’s line, in a eulogistic text about the black activist Rafael Serra, about “those who are so vile as to deny their mother’s womb.”<sup>16</sup> The first thing one must do to whiten one’s self is to hide one’s closest relatives.

### *Other aspects of his struggle*

As early as 1902, the *Veteranos de Color* [Veterans of Color] were raising their voices in protest against the unequal distribution of positions in different areas of government

affairs, particularly in the military, a domain in which the racism of civilian groups, but especially of U.S. military men who had intervened in the battle against Spain, had a great deal of influence. Since these veteran’s love of Cuba was more than proven, since blacks were the majority in the war, it was logical that they reject being second-class citizens in a Republic to which they, themselves, had contributed so much.

But one of the dilemmas that confronted them was that blacks were second to any white, regardless of whether they had fought for or against independence. D’Ou took the bull by the horns when it came to labor discrimination. According to the Santiago politician, many white office workers were completely incompetent, while competent blacks were without jobs. It was absolutely necessary for the government to hire more black Cubans, and not according to their political affiliation.<sup>17</sup>

Consider a brief anecdote which shows that the proposition that links the petit bourgeois Club Atenas and the ideas for black advancement that D’Ou postulated is not totally coherent. It is not cohesive, among other reasons, because there is evident dynamism in the Santiaguans formulations. If it were true that towards the end of his life he opened his eyes to Socialism in Russia, it would be difficult to establish, without a wide margin of error, any kind of idea that in reflecting something of 1918 didn’t also reflect that dynamism. D’Ou would live till 1939. We have already seen how he agrees with Marinello on the issue of the problem being a class-related one, which comes close to the general partialization that the Marxists, who are clueless on this subject without their theoretical leader, would perpetrate. As if it weren’t enough, Marx set forth more than one harmful idea.

Writers on the subject of the 1912 massacre against the Independent Party of Color recall D'Ou's project in the House, and that of Morúa Delgado, who, in the end, wrote the legislation that made the party illegal. For Barbara's son there were other kinds of organizations made up entirely by citizens of only one skin color, for which reason he proposed not to fight but rather broaden Morúa's proposal, which only applied to political parties.

According to the ex-Mambi's expectation: "No political party, association or institution, or religiously instructional, social or recreational one will be legal in Cuba so long as it is not equally open to all Cubans, irrespective of their circumstances, and regardless their race." Had it been that way, this formula would have finished off important sources of discrimination, which were, of course, everyday practices. None of the authors who write about this subject explains why Lino D'Ou did not go to the House the day his proposal, which had only one supporter—the black general Silverio Sánchez Figueras—, was being voted on.<sup>18</sup> He may have known even before he drafted it that the die was already cast for the Independents.

Several authors tackle an explanation of things reiterated by certain personalities of the nation's history and conveniently taken up by hegemonic discourse. There was an effort to affirm as true, with no caveats, that it was whites who freed blacks from slavery. It was not often specified that the emancipator had been the generation that after hesitating for almost two years declared the total abolition of slavery, the white insurrectionists. Furthermore, this happened sixteen years before Madrid, itself, did the same.

When D'Ou pointed out that "to restore" freedom "is not to cede" it, he was considering the problem more accurately.

Today, one might think that the phrase fits not the generation of 1868, but the white race as a whole. As a matter of fact, the U.S. interveners thought that D'Ou hated whites, "particularly Americans."<sup>19</sup>

More than one commentator has suggested that D'Ou never dared to go against Juan Gualberto's positions, out of admiration for him. This is false. In a 1907 article in the conservative daily *La Discusión* [The Discussion], the Santiaguan argued against Gómez, congressman Campos Marquetti and also black journalist Lorenzo Despradel, that the Directory's program (the cells from which the Independent Party of Color would emerge) did not differ in substance or form from the Central Directory of Cuban Societies of Color, organized almost two decades earlier by Gómez, himself.<sup>20</sup>

Obviously, D'Ou is referring to a period during which the leaders of the future Independents of Color used passive resistance as a strategy to be able to constitute themselves as a political party. As part of a prolonged newspaper polemic with Despradel, a Dominican who fought for Cuban independence, D'Ou maintained that the leaders of the Liberal Party had not helped blacks in the past and would not in the future either.

In what could be yet another surprise for those who have suggested that D'Ou had open-mouthed reverence for Juan Gualberto, he actually convinced Gómez and Marquetti to put aside party politics and join their black brothers in their struggle for justice.<sup>21</sup> Of course, one must consider that if Gómez was most certainly against the idea of a racial political party and he publicly criticized the Independents' violent methods, and additionally exhorted them to return to a legal status, he did not contest their demands, which were in every way justified.

Party politics took up almost all of Gómez's republican life, but this did not prevent him from righting many injustices against blacks who, knowing his influence, wrote to him. It is noteworthy that another study about the leader of Ibarra, that Enrique José Varona, Gómez's right hand in the nineteenth century and, for a large part of the twentieth, asserts that he moved to the left of Martí's friend towards the last decade of both their lives.<sup>22</sup> Of course, this change in the philosopher is due to certain political positions and not evidence that he had overcome his conservative position on the island's racial dilemma.

### *Other tidbits about this notable*

It is common knowledge that power always made beauty its own, transforming alterity into ugliness, another form of domination. Also, It is another concretion projecting fear of the other that Edward Said would eventually write about. Such fear is often bolstered by apparently objective and scientific discourse. To be constructed as an ugly race constitutes a humiliation and a form of dark, psychological oppression. Contradictorily, hegemony—of course, masculine—will always seek to clear its way of obstacles on the path to women of the supposedly ugly race. Another problem is that ugliness as a historical construction keeps whoever is subordinated from having access to a considerable gamut of job positions.

Black women, for example, were not able to become sales personnel in Havana's stores for many years. There are not too many black men and women on television, in Cuban film, in tourist-frequented public places and, of course, in positions where dividends are greater in these activities. Some experts who are suspiciously close to Havana's regime

maintain that there has been progress. But I am convinced that it is not enough so that the achievement comes even close to something definitive in a matter that, like prejudice in general, manifests a highly regressive potential. Fernando Ortiz, Alberto Arredondo, René Betancourt, and Alejandro de la Fuente dealt with aesthetic prejudice but, perhaps, some specifically Cuban inquiry as deep as Frantz Fanon's in *Piel negra, máscaras blancas* [Black Skin, White Masks] is needed. Miguel de la Torre's *Masking Hispanic Racism: A Cuba Case Study* establishes a benchmark along these lines.

In a classic of national journalism, Lino D'Ou describes one of the most outstanding Mambí leaders, Guiller món Moncada: "General Moncada was a gigantic black man, a beautiful example of the Ethiopian race, probably descended from the land of the Fulas, of whose bodies voyagers remarked—in the words of Golberry—"that they reminded one of Greek statuary."<sup>23</sup>

It is hardly worth analyzing the resistance that is evident here on the part of the aesthetically subaltern race. Any reminiscence about Greek statuary is nothing but an attempt to put the aesthetics of the black body on a par with that of the highest canon, and also according to a Western intellectual, Golberry's passage just bolsters something described with the authority of the institution. There is no doubt that D'Ou knew what he was doing.

This description is a celebration not of the beauty of black women but of black men, which is even more denigrating. To be sure, the paradigm of black male ugliness was also constructed to keep him away from white women. It is not redundant to point out that this model was forged by hegemony and power, but also in practically all social

spheres, even among blacks, whose identity was psychologically affected.

There is a definite reason why Fanon inscribes a part of the discourse parallel to aesthetic discrimination. This discourse mentions a penis that eclipses the black man, who has a sexual organ more suitable for the jungle. There was a desire to keep that penis far from the vagina of civilization. Once again it is fear, a contradictingly voracious fear such as that of the epistemological conscience criticized by Jean Paul Sartre.

Martí, with his political eminence, was the one who most battered hegemony, in this sense, but not by theorizing on the subject or taking it to Fanon's most modern confines but by showing an "other" beauty, making it visible in his sketches, his word paintings. I know of no Cuban literary document that has achieved the level of his *Diarios* [Diaries]. Lino D'Ou followed the same path.

As is often the case, public activity interferes with the limits of private life. That is exactly what happens to our Santiagoan. D'Ou had a son by his wife, Francisca Arce. In 1900, when the Republic was still proclaiming its birth, Pancha, as her husband called her, took a course at the Escuela de Verano de Harvard [the Harvard summer school], just before she became a teacher in the city of Guantánamo. The beautiful mulatta would receive a Diploma de Maestra Fundadora [a Founding Teacher's diploma] from the Escuela Pública Cubana [the Cuban Public School].

Although she had more than enough merits to be a member of the women's Lyceum Tennis Club, she had to wait for common sense to triumph over the racial prejudices of the board of an entity that had a positive place in Cuban society (which should not be overlooked). Pancha, just like D'Ou in his latter years, agreed with socialist ideas, something

about which the Santiagoan, in effect, once again disagreed with Juan Gualberto.

Historian Sergio Aguirre had no choice here but to call Gómez's rejection of what he called "frightful Bolshevism" sincere. In a postscript, to protect his back, the author—a old militant communist who writes in about 1990—calls this attitude in his biographical subject "repugnant."<sup>24</sup> Both black leaders did coincide, measure for measure, in another area of national politics—U.S. interventionism.

### *Abakuá, mason, universal*

The Catholic Church was not well treated by the ex-congressman, for what he called its "atrocities." The very same year he died, when he said of Guillén that his spirit became dust in the wind, he was recalling an oath the "Knights of Columbus" make in which they proclaim a ceaseless war against heretics, Protestants and masons. The oath, taken in the first person, is terrifying: "I will tear open the breasts of their women and smash their children's heads against the walls to annihilate their abominable race."

D'Ou combined this with disgusting examples of discrimination against Cuban blacks, and cites a church in Camagüey that forbade "saying mass on Tuesdays, as an offering to the souls of black folks."

Because D'Ou availed himself of any fact within his reach, he took up the case in which the black architect Gustavo Urrutia, an outstanding anti-racist, exhorted the Damas Isabelinas (a white, Catholic women's religious group) to share their charity work with black ladies and misses. Their answer was that they—the Isabelines—would make black women an object of their charity, but would not admit any member of that race into their fold. And, D'Ou graciously offered them the correction that the religious women should

have said they did not admit black persons “because there are, in fact, more than a dozen quadroons in the group.”

It is not too long before the exhortation to which the article’s tone hints is articulated. D’Ou calls for blacks to distance themselves from the Catholic Church, insisting that “[their] lamenting chants to Olorum, to Oyá, to Oggún, to Obatalá, who are [their] homeland gods and where whites are not discriminated, are preferable”; he emphasized that “[the] ranks of the Santeros and the Kimbisas are full of white men and women.”

The early paragraphs of this essay allude to D’Ou’s sense of humor, which also found a voice in journalism. It was probably our Santiagoan who first revealed facts about a most unusual coincidence, that Morúa and Juan Gualberto bilaterally celebrated, about the ‘intransigent repulsion’ (La Guerrita de Razas de 1912) [the Little Race War of 1912]. D’Ou recounts that during the political rebellion of 1906, Gómez, Morúa and generals José de Jesús Monteagudo and José Miguel Gómez were detained. These last two would end up being the most responsible for the massacre of more than 3,000 Independents and black civilians in 1912.

While in the Castillo del Príncipe prison, they were put in the same block; the cooperation of one of the prisoners was traditional. D’Ou adds: “One morning General Monteagudo played out his subservient role by serving up some deliciously aromatic coffee. Juan Gualberto loved his, lit up his opulent stogy and exclaimed—‘splendid coffee...!’ And, after a loud guffaw, Monteagudo responded—‘Thank God that Juan Gualberto has found good in one thing that Morúa had made...!’”

In a frequently misunderstood article about the Abakuás, Martí celebrated the fact that the Fambá shrine was built next to a

school where an ancient black man from the association was learning his first A, B, Cs.<sup>25</sup>. What the poet did here was to transfer to his homeland, to the borders of his homeland, the idea expressed in his essay “Nuestra América” [Our America] about “bringing together the headband and the toga,” an unobjectionable cultural gamble. Perhaps that is how he reached islanders like Lino D’Ou, with increasing logic.

This man’s life leaves no room for doubt with regards to his profound Cubanness. His is an extreme case. Well aware of his hybrid identity, with one foot in Africa and the other in Europe, he immersed himself in books, which in the West are a source that controls the position from which he speaks and the rich spirit he inherited from this maternal ancestor. He managed to combine its manner, inspiration and signal, in that way, the depths of his cultural marrow. Guillén said of him that “[he] was a universal criollo, a Ñáñigo and Mason, both common and civilized.”

The ex-Mambí shared with a group that included Guillén, García Agüero, Roig de Leuchsenring and others the work of the Sociedad de Estudios Afrocubanos [Society of Afro-Cuban Studies], which in 1937 had its offices and soul in the illustrious Fernando Ortiz’s office. Luciano Franco adds that D’Ou would go there in the company of the sacred Engrikamo drummer of the Bokoko’s, to give an impromptu talk about the formation and activities of the Abakuá, to whose work he devoted whatever free time he had beyond that he spent on the Masons.

Lino D’Ou y Ayllon has his own place among those who were involved in the creation of Cuba. It is also true that in calling himself Barbara’s son, he garnered an authenticity that is seldom achieved.

Notes and Bibliography

- 1- José Antonio Portuondo calls José Guadalupe Castellanos, a friend of D'Ou's, an enthusiastic biographer. Portuondo does not make it clear if the biography was published or not, although I'm inclined to think it was not, since Guillén, Luciano Franco or later writers do not mention it. See *Papeles del teniente coronel Lino D'ou* (La Habana: Ediciones Unión, 1983): 238. Many of the facts included in this essay come from that volume.
- 2- *Papeles*, 226 and 235.
- 3- *Ibid*, 241.
- 4- Estuch, Horrego Leopodo. *Juan Gualberto Gómez, un gran inconforme* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 2004):58. This edition contains a selection of unpublished documents about Juan Gualberto compiled by Oilda Hevia Lanier.
- 5- Scott, Rebecca J. *La emancipación de los esclavos en Cuba. La transición al trabajo libre, 1860-1899* (La Habana: Editorial Caminos, 1989):339.
- 6- Cubas, Pedro Alexander. *Ideales de una Raza. Gustavo Urrutia y su proyecto sociocultural en "Ideales de una Raza"*. *Los diez primeros artículos* (April 1928). *Anales de desclasificación. La derrota del área cultural* No. 2., Vol. 1, 2006, 630.
- 7- "Si eso es todo lo que tú y tu raza piden, tómenlo". Du Bois, W.E.B. *The Souls of Black Folk. Essays and Sketches* (Chicago: A.C, Mc Clurg & Co., 1918): 45.
- 8- Estuch, 148.
- 9- Cubas. *Ob. cit.*
- 10- Estuch, 57
- 11- Franco, José Luciano. *Antonio Maceo. Apuntes para una historia de su vida* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1989): III, 194.
- 12- *Ibid*.
- 13- Castro, Silvio Fernández. *La masacre de los Independientes de Color en 1912* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 2002): 63.
- 14- *Papeles*, 130
- 15- *Ibid*, 131
- 16- Martí, José. *Obras completas* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1975): IV, 379.
- 17- Helg, Aline. *Our Rightful share. The Afro-Cuban Struggle for Equality, 1886-1912* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press): 126.
- 18- See Castro, Fernández, 66; Fermoselle, Rafael. *Política y color en Cuba. La guerrita de 1912* (España: Editorial Colibrí [n.d.], Ed. Seg., 120); and Helg Aline, 183.
- 19- De la Fuente, Alejandro. *Una nación para todos. Raza, desigualdad y política en Cuba 1900-2000* (Madrid: Editorial Colibrí, Ed. Seg. [n.d.], 64).
- 20- Fermoselle, Rafael. *Política*, 105.
- 21- *Ibid*, 106.
- 22- Aguirre, Sergio. *Un gran olvidado: Juan Gualberto Gómez* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1997): 194.
- 23- *Papeles*, 68.
- 24- Aguirre, 88.
- 25- Martí, V: 325. "El fambá denomina el cuarto secreto y sagrado del abakuá o ñañigo."