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Angerona:  
Facts and Fictions about Cornelio Souchay  
and Ursula Lambert's Cuban Coffee Plantation

1. Rigoberto Lopez's movie "Roble de Olor"

"Roble de Olor" (Scent of Oak), a movie of 2003 by the Cuban director Rigoberto López Pego, has put the name of Cornelio Souchay before an international public, together with that of Ursula Lambert. The movie portrays him as an idealistic plantation owner, who ultimately loses his life in a showdown with a hostile society, and romanticizes his relationship to Ursula Lambert, a free mulata from Haiti, who fiercely defends her Afro-Caribbean religious and revolutionary heritage at her trial for witchcraft and abolitionism. At the end of the movie a spokeswoman explains to the audience: "The action in this movie is fiction, but the love between Ursula Lambert and Cornelio Souchay was real." Rigoberto López wrote to me on Nov. 7, 2004: "The movie is fictional and does not tell the actual biography of Cornelio Souchay and Ursula Lambert. It is, however, inspired by the actual love relationship of the couple in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and by the coffee plantation Angerona, founded by them, the ruins of which everybody can still visit. Thus, the movie is historic fiction, a metaphor. An oral tradition in the region has preserved the legend of the love between the German Cornelio Souchay and the Haitian Ursula Lambert. In the early nineties [actually 1987] Leonardo Padura published, in *Juventud Rebelde*, "El Romance de Angerona," which tells the fabled story of the German and the Haitian, who established the most prosperous coffee plantation in western Cuba in the 19<sup>th</sup> century."<sup>1</sup>

In an interview with "Granma Internacional" in 2003 Rigoberto Lopez spelled out what he calls a project of "magic realism" further: "In line with my work, with my world of poetry, for some time now I have felt the need to make a film tackling the ideas and thought that lie behind a subject... Roble de olor is a film about constructing and defending a utopia, about defending an identity and, in between, is a discourse against intransigence, against intolerance... a story that is similar to ours—the Cuban people."<sup>2</sup>

The film has been controversial. Some critics have called it a disjointed soap-opera and complained that it is correct neither politically nor historically. Others have welcomed its political and cultural agenda, as a symbolic story of Cuban race relations, and especially liked Ursula Lambert's courageous assertion of her Afro-Caribbean identity.<sup>3</sup> In "El Romance de Angerona" Leonardo Padura attributed to Ursula such a

<sup>1</sup> Rigoberto López Pego (born in 1947 in Havana), is well-known for several documentary movies. The present script was written together with Eugenio Hernandez Espinosa (born 1936), director of the Bertold Brecht-Center in Havana..

<sup>2</sup> Interview conducted by Mireya Castaneda, published by Digital Granma Internacional, Jan. 10, 2003.

<sup>3</sup> See Sandra del Valle Casals, "Haiti: Imagen documental y ficcional desde lo real-maravilloso el cine de Rigoberto López," *LaJiribilla*, Nr. 140 (2004). In the movie the

crucial role in establishing the coffee plantation (cafetal) that he spoke of a “magnificent Haitian-German empire,” a phrase since repeated by other writers.<sup>4</sup>

In movie, romance, commentary and news items, and also some historical accounts, fiction, fact and misinformation have been mixed up with one another. While film makers and literary writers have poetic license, historians search for the facts, which include, however, the cultural and political impact of fictions. Movie and romance proceeded from some facts to imaginative invention. Whereas Leonardo Padura was intent on imagining a steamy love relationship that would be consummated in the collaborative establishment of a great plantation, Rigoberto Lopez (and Eugenio Hernandez Espinosa) proceeded from this romance to a political message about Cuban and Haitian national self-definition in past and present. The interest of novelist and movie maker was aroused by some documents published in the late eighties in the *Boletín del Archivo Nacional* in Havana, which reawakened public interest in the history and site of Angerona, which had been founded in 1813 and named after the Roman goddess of Silence.

In 1989 the ruins of Angerona were declared a national monument.<sup>5</sup> The plantation site is a few miles west of Havana near Artemisa, a small town named after the Greek goddess. The travel guide *Cuba. Moon Handbooks* of 2004 contains a photograph of the frontal arches of the ruined mansion, with which the movie too opens. The guide correctly identifies Cornelio Souchay as the founder, but mistakes the marble statue in front of it for Artemis; it was stolen as recently as 2001, but had long ago lost its raised right arm whose fingers sealed the lips.<sup>6</sup> James A. Michener also confused the goddesses, when the Cuban historian Manuel Moreno Fraginals showed him the ruins. Uninformed, Michener speculated who could have built this huge complex.<sup>7</sup>

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heroine is played by Lia Chapman, daughter of a Haitian mother and Dominican father (*La Prensa San Diego*, March 28, 2003). Chapman, who grew up in New York City, liked the script so much that she insisted on playing Ursula. An audience in Havana is said to have reacted with an ovation to her speech at the trial. For an interview with Lia Chapman and Rigoberto Lopez, see Jon Hillson, “Suite Habana and Scent of Oak open in Hollywood,” *CubaNow.net* (October 2003). For Lopez’s reasons for choosing her instead of a Cuban actress, see his interview with Mireya Castaneda in *Digital Granma Internacional*, Jan. 10, 2003.

<sup>4</sup> Leonardo Padura, “El Romance de Angerona,” originally published in *Juventud Rebelde* in 1987; I thank the author for making his text available to me electronically.

<sup>5</sup> On June 6, 1989 the Comisión Nacional de Patrimonio declared Angerona a monumento nacional and assigned responsibility for its preservation to the city museum of Artemisa (which in all probability has no funds for that purpose). See “Angerona: una historia de amor” on the website of Radio Artemisa, Dec. 4, 2004.

<sup>6</sup> See Christopher P. Baker, *Cuba. Moon Handbooks*, third ed., 2004, 509f.

<sup>7</sup> See James A. Michener (1907-1997) and John Kings, *Six Days in Havana* (Austin: U. of Texas Press, 1989), 85-89, with ten pictures. In his short story “Twins,” about a family separated by Fidel Castro, Michener describes the ruins of Angerona under the name “Molino de Flores” and invents a scene of the slave liberation of the 1880s; see Michener, *Caribbean* (New York: Fawcett, 1989), 727ff.

## 2. Evidence for the relationship of Ursula Lambert and Cornelio Souchay

I shall try to get at the facts of the history of Angerona and the Souchay family insofar as the sources permit.<sup>8</sup> In the absence of hard historical evidence, the story of Ursula Lambert and Cornelio Souchay invites wishful speculation and literary embellishment. Intimate relations between free mulatas and negras with European and Creole men were a significant part of Caribbean society and are explained only in part by the shortage of white women.<sup>9</sup> For that matter, the mythology of the mulata became an important part of Cuban identity (Cuba mulata), as reflected in a large body of literature beginning with the first anti-slavery novels of the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in particular Cirilo Villaverde's *Cecilia Valdés*.<sup>10</sup> Ursula Lambert herself is variously described as

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<sup>8</sup> In the growing literature there has been no historical awareness about the wider context in which the name "Souchay" is relevant. In the years in which Cornelio became a highly successful plantation owner, a cluster of Anglo-German families around the Huguenot Souchays rose to be among the wealthiest merchant families in England, operating worldwide from their main bases in London and Manchester. The Souchays and related families were significant players in the expansion of the world economy and the rise of the "cosmopolitan capitalism" of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. See my German study, *Max Webers deutsch-englische Familiengeschichte 1800-1950* (Tuebingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), abbr. FG. For an English précis see "Max Weber, Scion of the Cosmopolitan Bourgeoisie. Historical Context and Present-Day Relevance," in Charles Camic et al., eds., *Max Weber's Economy and Society. A Critical Companion* (Stanford University Press, 2005), 31-46; "Max Weber: Family History, Economic Policy, Exchange Reform," *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, 15:3 (2002: 509-520, reprinted in *Sociedade e Estate*, 17:1 (2002): 56-73.

<sup>9</sup> In the literature consulted here native Spaniards, the peninsulares, are distinguished from the criollos, Spaniards (and Frenchmen) and Africans born in Cuba. Slaves born in Africa were called bozales. The term mulatto had a broad meaning. Hence the use of quotation marks by John Garrigus: "I use quotation marks around 'mulatto' and other racial terms for two reasons. First, contemporaries applied the term to the entire free population of color, though some of these people were of full African descent and many others were, technically, some mixture of African and European other than 'mulatto.' Secondly, I use quotation marks because this chapter is about the social construction of these racial terms." See John Garrigus, "New Christians/'New Whites': Sephardic Jews, Free People of Color, and Citizenship in French Saint-Domingue, 1760-1789," in Paolo Bernardini and Norman Fiering, eds., *The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West, 1450-1800* (New York: Berghahn, 2001), 327. Doris Y. Kadish uses "free black, free person of color, and mulatto interchangeably to refer to a class standing between slaves and whites, although there were in fact significant differences." See Doris Y. Kadish, ed., *Slavery in the Caribbean Francophone World* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2000), 13.

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, Vera M. Kutzinski, *Sugar's Secrets. Race and the Erotics of Cuban Nationalism* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993); Sibylle Fischer, *Modernity Disavowed. Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004); Adriana Mendez Rodenas, "Tropics of Deceit: Desire and the Double in Cuban Antislavery Narrative," in *Cuban Studies*, 28 (1999): 83-99; id., "Identity and

”una mulata libre de asombrosa inteligencia” (a free mulata of extraordinary intelligence), “una mujer negra, hermosa y distinguida,” “una negra haitiana libre”, and “una negra libre de origen haitiano-africano,” “la bella mestiza haitiana”.<sup>11</sup> Padura is free to elevate her to “la negra mas bella, distinguida, apetitosa y mejor perfumada de San Cristobal de La Havana.”

To my knowledge, there are no personal documents illuminating the nature of the relationship between Ursula Lambert and Cornelio Souchay, with two important exceptions: In his brief testament of Sept. 4, 1835 he stated that she had in her care a sealed envelope with the specifics of his testamentary provisions, apart from his other papers. After his death Ursula swore before the judge Francisco Rubio Campo that she did not have this envelope but only the one-page general testament, which mentioned only her and as executors Enrique Gatke, Rafael Diaz, Francisco Alvarez y Espinosa and Petro Calderon. The judge certified her oath because she declared that she could not write (porque dijo no saber).<sup>12</sup> Whatever may have been in the sealed envelope, Cornelio changed his testament on June 11, 1837, one day before his death at the age of not quite fifty-three years. In the 1835 testament he had declared that only documents with the handwritten addition “roble de olor” should be recognized as valid. (In the movie these three words become a secret sign between the two lovers.) In the codicil of 1837, which

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Incest in *Cecilia Valdes*: Villaverde and the Origin(s) of the Text,” *Cuban Studies*, 24 (1994):83-104. Mendez Rodenas observes: “*Cecilia Valdes* is a foundational text of Cuban nationality not merely because it signals the mingling of races characteristic of Cuba-mulatta, but also because it reenacts the tragedy of incest as a structural component of the Cuban psyche” (83).

Villaverde wrote a first version of his novel in 1839, when he visited Angerona. For this reason Rigoberto López and Reynaldo Gonzales suppose that Angerona was the model. In his years of exile in New York Villaverde, who had been sentenced to death around 1850, revised and expanded the novel (1881). See the new English translation by Helen Lane, edited by Sibylle Fischer, *Cecilia Valdés or El Angel Hill* (Oxford University Press, 2005); an older translation is by Mariano J. Lorente, *The Quadroon or Cecilia Valdes. A Romance of Old Havana* (Boston: Page, 1935). Under the title “Cecilia” the novel was made into a movie by Humberto Solas in 1982. See Reynaldo Gonzalez, “Scent of an Oak: Love, Racism and Intolerance in a New Cuban Film,” *CubaNow.net* (2003/4). I don’t recognize any physical depiction of Angerona in the novel (224-242), but it may evoke something of its atmosphere.

<sup>11</sup> Karen Brito Breijo, “Historia entre ruinas,” *Havana Tropico* (website); Renaldo Gonzalez, *La Jiribilla*, Nr. 128; “Todo no es verdad en filme Roble de Olor, *Cubarte*, May 2004; *Cubaencuentro.com*, Oct. 29, 2003; *Excelencias Turisticas del Caribe*, edition No 5 (2005).

<sup>12</sup> Land purchase, testament, inventory and other documents about inheritance and debt disposition are printed in the *Boletin del Archivo Nacional* (Habana); see Jorge du Bouchet López and Albert du Bouchet Hernandez, “Coleccion de documentos para la historia del cafetal Angerona: Las primeras compras de tierra por don Cornelio Souchay” (Nr. 1, 1986: 65-81); Jorge du Bouchet, “Testamento, codicilo, muerte y entierro de don Cornelio Souchay” (Nr. 2, 1987: 35-43); id., “La fortuna de don Cornelio Souchay” (Nr. 3, 1989:58-98). For Ursula Lambert’s statement of July 15, 1837, see du Bouchet, “Documentos....,” 42.

began with the legitimating phrase, Cornelio gave Ursula a life annuity of 1,200 pesos per year, with the understanding that she did not claim the 20,000 pesos owed to her. The fact that he tried to make a provision for her in the face of his death, suggests a significant personal relationship or at least a sense of personal indebtedness.<sup>13</sup> It points to Ursula's special role at Angerona and strengthens the recent claims that Angerona was the successful creation of both.

In fact, in the early thirties Ursula Lambert made her contribution publicly known in a self-confident legal challenge highly unusual for a woman in her disadvantaged position. Cornelio stipulated the annuity with the condition that she would forgo her claim to 20,000 pesos, which he owed to her, having used the amount with her consent for a debt settlement.<sup>14</sup> He had previously acknowledged the debt in the course of a settlement with creditors approved by the authorities on Feb. 16<sup>th</sup> 1833. When a lawyer for other creditors excluded Ursula's claim because she held no officially recognized position, she fought back with the help of her own legal counsel, who represented her as arguing: "I don't see why the fact that I am owed 20,000 pesos should be so repugnant for the sole reason that I am a woman... a woman's services can be more profitable than any man's... my work should be given a name that explains how much it contributed to the plantation's productivity and profits."<sup>15</sup>

According to Berta Martinez, the apparent source of several other accounts, Ursula came to Angerona in May 1822, managing the household (*vivienda*) and assuming a function of great importance for the productivity of the *cafetal*: running the infirmary and the children's ward (*casa de los criollitos*), where children lived up to ten years of age. Her salary is given as 150 (or 200) pesos per month, which also included the costs of training women in the care of the sick.<sup>16</sup> After Cornelio's death she is said to have stayed

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<sup>13</sup> Because Cornelio was already too weak to write, Rafael Diaz wrote down the codicil the day before the death of his friend and business associate. The first provision appointed him and Cornelio's nephew André Souchay joint administrators, the second stipulated Ursula's annuity.

<sup>14</sup> "Es tambien mi ultima voluntad que a Ursula Lambert se le asegure una pension de mil doscientos pesos anuales... bien entendido que no reclamara los veinte mil pesos que representaba en mi concurso y de los que he usado con su consentimiento." See Jorge du Bouchet, "Testamento..." 41.

<sup>15</sup> Left in the dark by Jorge du Bouchet ("La Fortuna...", 60), the matter has now been elucidated by Luz Mena, "Stretching the Limits of Gendered Spaces: Black and Mulatto Women in 1830s Havana," *Cuban Studies*, 36 (2005): 87-104. She acknowledges an unpublished 1996 paper by the Cuban historian Berta Martinez Paez, "Ursula Lambert, la diosa negra del *cafetal* Angerona," where the sources in the Archivo Nacional in Havana are listed. Luz Mena judges: "The obvious question of why Souchay did not call Ursula an 'administrator' and why he did not just give her a gift of money equivalent to the owed wages, instead of trying to justify his debt without appropriate documentation, were not raised in the case. But it is clear that either action would have caused him social scandal. The job of administrator was reserved for white males. A large gift of money from a white man to a black woman would have suggested an illicit romantic relationships between them, a relationship that they either did not have, or hid very carefully" (95).

<sup>16</sup> This fits in with the general description of slave plantations by Moreno Fraginals: "When the personnel topped four hundred, a doctor moved into the mill instead of getting

for some time at Angerona before moving back to her business in Havana, where she died about 1860.<sup>17</sup> According to Maria del Carmen Barcia, on her death Ursula owned a house, many (clothing) articles of gold, coral and diamonds, but also twenty-one slaves, and had 4,000 pesos in cash.<sup>18</sup>

Ursula Lambert, whose birth year is not known, arrived in Havana at a fairly young age with thousands of French and creole refugee families, who fled Saint-Domingue and partly brought funds and slaves with them.<sup>19</sup> They made Cuba the new center of coffee production. Padura claims that Ursula Lambert—her last name is more frequent in French than her first—came from the “paternal hacienda El Cabo” [the Cape] (hacienda paterna) and managed to bring along some capital with which she established a clothing and perfume business in Havana. If this is true, the question arises whether she possibly was the daughter, legitimate or illegitimate, of a mulatto plantation and slave

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a stipend for periodic visits. From the 1840s on, there was also a ‘free Negro woman known as Black Mama’.” [Was Ursula an early “Black Mama”?] See Manuel Moreno Fraginals, *The Sugar Mill. The Socioeconomic Complex of Sugar in Cuba 1760-1860*, trans. Cedric Belgrave (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976), 152.

<sup>17</sup> See Karen Brito Breijo (Dept. of Communication, U. of Havana), “Historia entre ruinas,” Habana Tropico (website), August 2001. This author too cites Berta Martinez as the source of her historical information. A paper by Martinez, “Una pequena cronica para Ursula Lambert,” was announced for a women’s conference at the U. of Havana in November 2005 (Taller International website).

Perhaps Ursula stayed on for another year until, after an absence of at least four months, Cornelio’s nephew and successor André Souchay returned with his bride Bertha Hesse, whom he married on July 27, 1838, and his brother Hermann from Germany, presumably in September. This established a German family household, in which Ursula could not longer play an indispensable role. (In the movie a figure modeled after Bertha Hesse is cast as Ursula’s sexual competitor for Cornelio’s attachment.)

<sup>18</sup> See the report on Maria del Carmen Barcia’s paper “De esclavas a senoras: pequenos espacios de poder” by Dalia Acosta, “Esclavas o libertas, verdaderas transgresoras de su epoca,” Cimacnoticias (website), Feb. 22, 2005. The details may again be based on Berta Martinez.

Padura claims that Ursula turned down her annuity. This is repeated in “Todo no es verdad en el filme Roble de Olor” in Cubarte of May 2004. In the latter article, however, there may be a mixup with the 20,000 pesos mentioned in the codicil of 1837 in connection with the pension, which is here erroneously reduced to 200 pesos per year. The article also claims falsely that Cornelio lived with a sister.

<sup>19</sup> For the general background on the economic impact of the refugees, see Franklin W. Knight, *Slave Society in Cuba during the nineteenth century* (Madison: U. of Wisconsin Press, 1970), 12f. For some time Souchay was taken for a French planter, understandably so because of his name. Early in 1835 the English traveler Charles Augustus Murray visited the district of San Marcos and described a coffee plantation, which Isidro Mendez mistook for Angerona. But the planter “Mr. C.” was an aged French refugee from Saint-Domingue. See Isidro Mendez, “Biografia del Cafetal Angerona,” *Revista de Arqueologia y Etnologia*, VII:15-16 (1952): 269-289, esp. 275; compare with Murray, *Travels in North America during the Years 1834, 1835 and 1836* (London: Bentley, 1839), vol. 2: 225-230.

owner. In that case she would have belonged to the gens de couleur, which were such an important group in Saint-Domingue.<sup>20</sup> But her (family) background remains opaque.

Cornelio is said to have met Ursula in 1809 in Havana. As a single European male of twenty-five, without fortune and locally known family descent, the French-reformed immigrant from a Huguenot lineage could (and would) not approach the pious Catholic daughters of the plantation and mercantile elite. As a free mulata from francophone Saint-Domingue Ursula had a vulnerable social position and limited upward opportunities. Socially marginal, if in different ways, and unattached, they were free to choose one another for their mutual benefit.<sup>21</sup>

### 3. Cornelio Souchay's early Cuban years and the beginnings of Angerona

In contrast to the Cuban decades almost nothing is known about Cornelio's early years. He was born on October 21, 1784 in Hanau (Hesse), a small court residence with a large Huguenot refugee population. Registered at birth as Corneille, his German name

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<sup>20</sup> "The free coloreds in Saint-Domingue... owned one-third of the plantation property, one-quarter of the slaves, and one-quarter of the real estate property... they were also competing vigorously in commerce and trade." See Joan Dayan, *Haiti, History, and the Gods* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 224.

<sup>21</sup> If non-Spanish merchants and planters were socially suspect to Peninsulares and Creoles, they in turn might shy away from legalizing their relationships with Creole women, even apart from issues of religious affiliation. Antonio Gallenga, who visited Cuba in 1870 as a correspondent for the London "Times," described an encounter with an educated (gebildete) European, apparently a German, who lived with a Creole woman without any intention to marry her:

"For what concerns morality, I need only mention that one of my kind hosts in a southern seaport—a native of Europe, a well-educated man, and who treated me to some excellent Bavarian beer, as well as to a sonata of Beethoven, and a selection from Meyerbeer's 'Muette de Portici,' all exquisitely executed on the violin, accompanied by a handsome lady on the pianoforte—on being complimented by me on his own and his 'wife's' performance, took the first opportunity to lead me aside, and whispered that the 'lady' was not his wife, as wives in Cuba were for foreigners altogether out of the question; that both they and the Peninsulars only 'keep company' with the Cuban women who have no objection to the arrangement... It is but justice to say that, although my good friend evidently conceived that 'to wed a Cuban would be to lose caste,' I know instances where English or other foreign settlers have married Creole women, and where they had by no means to rue the consequences" (156f.) See Antonio Gallenga, *The Pearl of the Antilles* (London: Chapman, 1873, repr. New York, Negro Universities Press, 1970), 156f. Gallenga (1810-1885), also known as a Risorgimento publicist under the nome de guerre Luigi Mariotti, married Juliet Schunck (1826-1855) in Manchester in 1847 and thus into the wider Souchay clan. See also his autobiography, *Episodes of My Second Life* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1884), vol. 2, 157ff. and 360. (Cf. FG 125). For the general context see Verena Martinez-Alier, *Marriage, Class and Colour in Nineteenth-Century Cuba. A Study of Racial Attitudes and Sexual Values in a Slave Society* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974).

was Cornelius. He and his siblings were orphaned early. In 1787, his father, Isaac Pierre (1748-?), ruined his own father, the Hanau goldsmith Esay Souchay, abandoned his family and disappeared in Russia. Soon afterwards Cornelius's mother died. After the family's ruin, grandfather Esay and the grandchildren moved to Luebeck, which became the location of a new branch of the Souchays. As was usual, young Cornelius was sent to relatives for his apprenticeship; his aunt Marianne Souchay (1766-1838) was married to Ludwig von Kapff (1765-1841), a wine-merchant in Bremen.<sup>22</sup> As an orphan with no starting capital, he had nothing to lose in trying his luck in America. He also came as one of many economic and political refugees from the Napoleonic period and ahead of the general opening of Latin America, including Spanish Cuba and Puerto Rico to foreign entrepreneurs. Cornelius left Bremen in 1804, when he was twenty, and first explored Baltimore and Philadelphia before moving to Havana in 1807 and becoming Don Cornelio.<sup>23</sup>

Baltimore had close trade connections with Saint-Domingue, and, like Havana, became a haven for the Francophone refugees from the victorious slave revolution of the seventeen nineties. In his romance, Padura lets Cornelio Souchay see his first "flesh and bone Negress" (negra de carne y hueso) in Baltimore and feel strongly attracted, but whatever the poetic license, Haitian blacks and mulattoes were indeed numerous, since "well-established commercial relations between Maryland planters and merchants and Caribbean planters made Baltimore a particularly logical terminus for the *émigrés*. Hundreds of negroes and mulattoes, many of whom identified with or belonged to the Caribbean planter class in terms of sympathies, self-interest, education, and wealth, composed a significant portion of these successive waves of French Caribbean immigration."<sup>24</sup>

According to Padura, in Havana Souchay started out as a clerk in the well-known firm of Antonio de Frias & Compania, but within a few years became an anonymous partner. The firm imported flour from the United States, but its great profits were in reality owed to the legal and illegal African slave trade: "In truth, they were the second

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<sup>22</sup> See Otto Doehner, *Das Hugentengeschlecht Souchay de la Duboissière und seine Nachkommen* (Neustadt: Degener, 1961), 42, 47, 50.

<sup>23</sup> Souchay could not anticipate that President Jefferson would impose an embargo in November 1807, which greatly reduced trade with Cuba until 1809. At the same time there was a general expectation that the island might be bought by the United States, as Jefferson indeed tried to do, since Spain had lost control in the wake of Napoleon's invasion of the Iberian peninsula. For a time there was a very fluid situation in Cuba, which made it easier for foreign merchants to penetrate.

<sup>24</sup> Diane Batts Morrow, "Francophone Residents of Antebellum Baltimore and the Origins of the Oblate Sisters of Providence," in Doris Y. Kadish, ed., *Slavery in the Caribbean Francophone World*, 123.- For a time the US pursued a vacillating policy toward the revolution in Saint-Domingue. Hamilton and Jefferson sent aid to the beleaguered French settlers. Timothy Pickering, secretary of state from 1795 to 2000, made a strong effort to support Toussaint Louverture, but when Jefferson became president in 1800, he initiated a long policy of hostility to the new nation, reflecting the southern slave-holding interests. See Garry Wills, "Negro President". *Jefferson and the Slave Power* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2003), 33-46.

largest slave trader in Cuba” (Padura).<sup>25</sup> New associates poured their capital into the firm, which successively was called Frias, Gutierrez, Morland y Compania and Frias, Morland y Compania. Cornelio is said to have had a share of twenty-five percent in the company, but kept it secret because of the government’s vacillating immigration and trade policies.<sup>26</sup>

In time Cornelio conceived the plan to turn himself into a plantation owner with slaves of his own. In August 1813 “Don Cornelio Suesé [Souchay]” acquired from Maria Blaza Bosmeniel in San Marcos de la Artemisa land at the price of 14,000 pesos, to be paid for with 1,000 pesos per annum at five percent interest. Since it took four years for a coffee tree to become productive and since slaves and land were added only gradually, Angerona cannot have been a major enterprise until the early twenties.<sup>27</sup> After that a rapid expansion must have taken place, so that by 1828 Angerona was considered the second-largest cafetal (out of more than 2,000) on the island. In Havana, Cornelio continued to be a partner in the Frias companies from 1814 to 1825 and finally acted as liquidator after the death of Antonio de Frias. It was normal for partnerships to be dissolved or reorganized every few years, but no less normal were high indebtedness and frequent bankruptcy of planters and merchants, owing to the fact that the coffee and sugar exports and also the illegal slave imports were subject to large and rapid fluctuations in price and quantity. Cornelio’s mortgages and debts were not unusual. In 1830 he and the widow and heirs of Don Antonio were forced to sell to “Roberto Oliver in Baltimore the sixth part of the value that each of them had in the cafetal Santa Amelia, situated in Sabanilla de Vivos y Mertos, with 95 Negroes or slaves of both sexes, all ages and nationalities... at a price of 18,030 pesos each.... This was the debt for the defunct Frias & Co.”<sup>28</sup>

<sup>25</sup> The Frias firm competed with James Drake & Co, which also imported food, textiles and lumber from the United States, in partnership with Charles W. Storey in Newburyport, MA, and later with Edward Cohen and Alexander Kleinwort. See Roland T. Ely, *Cuando reinaba Su Majestad el Azucar* (Havana: Imagen Contemporanea, 2001, first publ. 1963), 342ff., 364ff.; see also FG, 135f. Most of the food imports served the feeding of the slaves.

<sup>26</sup> Given Cornelio Souchay’s apprenticeship in Bremen, it is likely that he was also handling the import and export business with that port and Hamburg. For example, on Dec. 5, 1817, Frias & Co. received the Swedish brig Catalina with “clothing” from Hamburg (Diario del Gobierno de la Habana, according to a kindly communication from Sherry Johnson, email of July 26, 2005). Hamburg and Bremen merchants were significantly represented from the 1820s and 1830s on in Cuba, according to the documentation in Renate Hauschild-Thiessen’s introduction to *Ein Hamburger auf Kuba. Briefe des Kaufmanns Alfred Beneke 1842-1844* (Hamburg: Gesellschaft der Bücherfreunde, 1971). Beneke was a clerk in Weber, Balbiani & Co., in which three distant relatives of Max Weber’s family line were associés. The German-born Gerhard Balbiani was the Catholic partner.

<sup>27</sup> The step by step buildup of a typical cafetal is described in Hugh Thomas, *Cuba or the Pursuit of Freedom* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1971), 130f.

<sup>28</sup> J. du Bouchet citing from the protocols in the Archive Nacional, 60. Among other creditors were Abraham Durninger and Federico and Everardo (Friedrich and Eberhard) Delius in Bremen, Israel Thorndike in Boston and several Spanish merchants and investors. Cuban law protected, however, the plantations from seizure for debts, and

For somebody like Cornelio Souchay who had not grown up in a slave society it was a big step to become a slave owner, although lessened by his (presumptive) involvement with the slave trade. By contrast, for Ursula Lambert slavery had always been a fact of life. There is no direct evidence for what both of them thought about the ethical antinomies of slavery. This contrasts with the recorded ideological and practiced racism on the part of Cornelio's nephew and successor André Souchay (1812-1853), for whom no ethical qualms existed. In 1845 the globe-trotter Carl Heinrich Graf von Goertz spent three weeks on Angerona.<sup>29</sup> Claiming that he was quoting his host "almost verbatim" (218), Goertz had André assert, with an untroubled conscience, a German moral and cultural superiority over the slaves as well as the creoles: "Ten years of experience have taught him, says Souchay, that the Negro character is so inferior that one cannot find any moral motives for his actions. The moral sense is completely underdeveloped. All actions derive from animal instinct or sly calculation of personal advantage... There is not one among the [320] Negroes who has not received lashes, and none who has not deserved it... Madame Souchay [Bertha Hesse] spoke of the loyalty of her female house slaves. It may be that femininity even in the inferior form of the Negress leads to an attachment to a white member of her sex.... It is to be regretted that the flourishing state of Angerona remains an unreachable ideal for the creoles. With a rare display of efficiency and theoretical and practical expertise Don André manages his plantation with the help of German subordinates. [Ursula Lamberg was long gone.] But the lazy creole considers it beneath his vaunted dignity to acquire the necessary knowhow."<sup>30</sup>

#### 4. The Rev. Abiel Abbot inspects the "humane model plantation" Angerona

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illegally imported slaves could not be removed once they had arrived at their inland destinations. Up to 1834 Cuban slave ships, financed by merchants in Havana and Santiago de Cuba, dominated the trade. See Herbert Klein, *The Middle Passage. Comparative Studies in the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Princeton University Press, 1978), 225.

<sup>29</sup> Carl Heinrich Graf von Goertz, *Reise um die Welt* (Stuttgart, 1852), vol. 2, 213. Goertz's visit can be dated to the year 1845, because he mentions the great hurricane of 1844 but not the one of 1846 which also did much damage to the cafetales (cf. FG, 659). I consider it possible that Don Andrés' denigration of the slaves and the (Spanish) Creoles contained an element of self-justification as a slave owner, in order to appear in the best possible light before his aristocratic visitor, who went on to preside for many years over the Upper House of the Grand-Duchy of Hesse-Darmstadt.

<sup>30</sup> Goertz, 213ff. He also mentions that the "great uprising of 1844" did not "infect" the slaves of Angerona, "the best-kept, most industrious and most compliant slaves of the island" (216). The notorious Escalera of 1844, named after the ladders to which victims were tied during gruesome floggings, involved the torture of thousands and killing of hundreds of slaves but also "free people of color" by the authorities which invented a vast conspiracy, when in fact only minor uprisings had occurred in 1843. On the extent of various conspiratorial efforts, see David R. Murray, *Odious Commerce. Britain, Spain and the Abolition of the Cuban Slave Trade* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1980), ch. 9, "The Escalera Conspiracy."

This raises the question of whether Don Cornelio, in contrast to his nephew, was exceptional in that he was driven by humanitarian motives (which the movie magnifies into a utopian dream). The frequently repeated assertion of Cornelio's humanitarian outlook and practice originated in the only direct eyewitness account, by the Reverend Abiel Abbot (1770-1828), pastor of the First (Congregational) Church in Beverly, Massachusetts, who visited Angerona in April and May 1828. (Not recognizing the Roman Goddess, he misspelled it "Angenora or Argenora.") His portrayal differs radically from Goertz's. Contrary to André's claim that Cornelio had been "a loner, who discouraged visitors by the very fact of naming his estate Angerona and erecting a statue of the goddess of silence.... and letting his incomparably beautiful avenue grow over with thorny hedges" (213), Abbot found Cornelio "as communicative as the inquisitive could desire....As this vast estate is conducted on principles somewhat original, some might take upon them to say, eccentric, and yet with excellent success; and as many of the expensive arrangements have a striking character of humanity, while also they result in excellent discipline, several of my friends acquainted with the proprietor, attended me to see it. Fortunately, the planter, who is also a merchant, was on the estate."<sup>31</sup> Abbot's overall conclusion was: "The best comment on these humane arrangements is, that a more healthy, muscular, active set of negroes, as many have remarked, is not to be found on the island."

Abbot's careful account demonstrates that Cornelio Souchay's practices were a mixture of humanitarian sentiment and rational calculus, and it inescapably reveals the darker sides next to the "brighter" ones in what was certainly a peculiarly tough-minded humanitarianism. Unsurprisingly, Ursula Lambert's contribution remains visible in only a very indirect way. Abbot was especially impressed by the "splendid infirmary," which was still under construction: "the basement story is finished, and the principal story is almost completed.... [it] displays taste and humanity... The building is to terminate with a third story on the central part, divided into two rooms, the principal for the matron, or grand nurse of the establishment"—that would have been Ursula's—"the other for the apothecary" (143f.). But the basement contained not only isolation rooms for patients with contagious diseases, but also the stocks for men and women, although they were "spacious and well ventilated," and a storeroom which "in case of insurrection is intended as a place of confinement" (143).

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<sup>31</sup> Abbiel Abbot, *Letters written in the Interior of Cuba* (Boston: Bowles & Dearborn, 1829), 140, 144; a newer Spanish translation is *Cartas. Escritas en el interior de Cuba* (Habana: Consejo Nacional de Cultura, 1965), 210-218. Abbot went to the American south and Cuba in the hope of improving his failing health. He died on the return voyage on June 7, 1828, in view of New York harbor and was buried on Staten Island. A serious observer, he regularly reported his observations to family members and friends. He intended to publish the letters almost immediately and "wrote directions, on the eve of his departure from Cuba, as to the arrangement and disposal of his manuscript, in the event of his decease" (from the book's Advertisement). Not knowing enough Spanish, Abbot was always accompanied by "one or more gentlemen familiar with the tongues [plural!] of the island" (from the preface). He does not indicate who accompanied him on his first visit and in which language he conversed with Cornelio Souchay, who was (at least) trilingual, as was the "Monsieur P.," with whom Abbot passed through the estate on his second visit, when they met only the (German?) mayoral.

When ninety slaves suffered the chickenpox in 1825, only one died. (How much was due to Ursula Lambert's efforts?) Among Cornelio's partly pragmatic, partly humane measures were the thirty huts he had erected in the field as protection against sudden downpours. Abbot noted that "the proprietor carefully avoids overworking his negroes, as tending to fill his infirmary" (144). But work ceased completely only on the first of January, when the slaves received a change of clothing and a remission of punishments. This day "is entirely given up to mirth and festivity... and for one day in the year the slaves are everything but master" (145).

Abbot took a benign view of the enclosed negro quarter with its massive iron gate. "When the plantation becomes as populous as the proprietor hopes it will, this square will be a little negro city, with streets running at right angles." This indicates that Cornelio aimed even beyond the large number of present slaves, which numbered 450. Abbot approved of their lockup: "At night the gateway is effectually closed... The security is an advantage to the slaves as to the masters; and therefore is [a] matter of humanity. It promotes regularity of conduct and habits, prevents thieving and conspiracy, and most of those delinquencies which bring upon them the hunt of men and dogs, the lash, and sometimes punishment of death."<sup>32</sup>

Abbot was impressed by the hygienic efforts in the "lying-in hospital and inclosure for the young creoles, an interesting and populous spot. You first enter the yard, inclosed by a plastered wall, the top of which is set with broken glass. This yard has a plastered floor like a coffee-dryer, that the creoles may not be able to find dirt to eat, which they are prone to do, and which brings on swelling of the bowels, and destroys many of them. Here we saw a double row of cradles well filled, and a young creature only fifteen years old sitting between two of them to take care of her twins. In the whole inclosure were ninety-five creoles under ten years of age; and the most discontented little thing among them became instantly quiet, when perched in naked ebony on his master's arm" (142).<sup>33</sup> The number of children appears extraordinarily large in view of the high child mortality and widespread infanticide, but the posthumous inventory of 1838 is even

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<sup>32</sup> This observation is from the letter of Feb. 19, from the plantation La Carolina (13). Abbot still uses the term *bohea* instead of *barracon* (closed quarters). In earlier times the Negro huts (*boheas*) were usually not lockups. In view of his large number of slaves Cornelio built the kind of *barracon* that became standard for the sugar plantations.

Abbot's remarks show that, although he was a well-known temperance apostle, he was no principled opponent of slavery. He considered, however, the Spanish system superior to the American, because it made manumission easier in law, if not in fact. Slaves were supposed to be freed when they were able to pay off the price the master had paid for them; they could do this, for example, by raising and selling pigs. With the predominance of the *ingenios* in later decades and their insatiable need for slave labor, manumission became much rarer.

<sup>33</sup> Seventeen years later, Goertz observed the same setup, again relating Don André's views: "He never has his Negroes married, because, as he said bluntly, that would mean throwing pearl before swine in view of their complete lack of understanding the moral meaning of marriage. The mothers are brought into the 'creole house' a month or two before delivery and don't have to work for up to forty days. The children then remain with special caretakers, until they are capable of working. The girls stay in the 'cloister' until their 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> year and then can choose a man" (225).

somewhat higher.<sup>34</sup> Abbot observed: “Children are sometimes destroyed through the jealousy of the husbands, and also through the neglect and abuse of unnatural mothers. One woman was pointed out to me suspected of having made it easy for four of her children to die; they died. At the birth of the fifth the master warned her that if the child did not live, she should smart for it; he lives, and is one of the finest of the creoles.” Souchay’s cost-benefit calculation was the opposite of that of many planters in the Caribbean who had a long tradition of working their male slaves to death because of the seemingly inexhaustible African supply. But when that supply became less certain, female slaves became more valuable: “As difficulties are thrown more and more in the way of importation of slaves from Africa, a greater attention is paid to pregnant females, to preserve the stock of the plantation... They are exempt from labor for a month before and after birth, to nurse themselves and the child, and have hours of the day for months for the same purpose, during which others are at work” (March 9, 41).

For the slaves infanticide and suicide were ultimate expressions of resistance.<sup>35</sup> Cornelio tried to save as many children as possible, if necessary with threats, but his pragmatic goal was the enlargement of his workforce. In view of his remarkable success in keeping children alive, Abbot recommended his methods to other planters. Healthy children could also be put to work relatively early. On his second visit to Angerona in May 1828, Abbot admired the construction of a dam across the San Juan river intended to increasing the productivity of a saw mill. With the Black overseers (contramayorales) “each his badge of office in his hand [the whip]... quickening their pace with the word of cheer... the hands, men and women, boys and girls, with baskets on their heads, were carrying their loads, proportioned to their strength, like a foraging party of *bibiaguas*.”<sup>36</sup> The 1838 inventory, which makes all slaves visible by their names, lists 25 boys (*criollos*) between five and ten as fieldworkers (*de campo*), and 22 *criollas* between seven and ten.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> The inventory lists 56 male children under 8 and 52 female children under 9; an additional 19 between nine and ten years of age seem to be counted among the workforce already. There were about one hundred women of reproductive age, if one counts those from 15 to 40 years of age. See Jorge du Bouchet, “La fortuna...,” 81-85.

<sup>35</sup> For the general context, see Barbara Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society 1650-1838* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), esp. ch. 7, “Slave motherhood: childbirth and infant death in a cross-cultural perspective”; Marietta Morrissey, *Slave Women in the New World. Gender Stratification in the Caribbean* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1989). Antonio Gallenga detected an improvement in child mortality in the wake of the Moret Law of 1870 that promised a gradual emancipation and envisaged slave children being set free at age eighteen: “I have seen the *Cria*, or negro nursery, in many of the estates, and it is touching to see with what pride the slave mother lifts up in her arms the little naked *picaninny* who is one day to become a free man” (*The Pearl of the Antilles*, 123). At about the same time this description was paralleled by a more cynical one in Samuel Hazard, *Cuba with Pen and Pencil* (Hartford: Hartford Publishing Co., 1871), 354.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Abbot, p. 11: “.. the greatest annoyance to the planter, the *bibiagua*, an ant of half the size of our black ant.”

<sup>37</sup> I notice that almost all *criollos* and all *criollas* are under twenty years of age, mostly born after 1820, whereas most *bozales* are between thirty and fifty, indicating that they

Among the features that impressed Abbot were also Cornelio's elegant private quarters, which included a library of some five hundred books in several languages and a collection of paintings. (Books were a rarity on most Creole plantations.) The sculpture of a water sprite in the dining room dispensed water for washing one's hands. But Cornelio had not built a separate mansion in the style of the American south. The impressive ruins of the broad arcade with its four doric columns, which appear in so many photographs, may evoke an association with a southern mansion in the US. In fact, however, Cornelio combined in one huge complex his private quarters and workshops, stores, mills, maternity and children's wards. Thus, he was surrounded by many of the most important operations of his enterprise. Here worked many of his skilled craftsmen (38 in the inventory), who included carpenters, masons, wheelrights, weavers, smiths, and one tailor, cooper, and painter; among the women were a dozen dressmakers, washerwomen and cooks. The clamor must have been considerable, giving an ironic twist to the Goddess of Silence standing out front. "On the whole," Abbot concluded in his second letter on Angerona, "I have seen ... no estate which appears better conducted, and which gives so fair a promise one day of a superb and beautiful batey, with every convenience and luxury which an oriental fancy could desire."<sup>38</sup> But it was not to be.

Given the high rate of contemporary mortality, Cornelio, in his early forties, took care to prepare his own grave: "Mr. S. has prepared his last bed, at the northern entrance to his estate; and the coffin, he remarked, was to be soon made of incorruptible wood." He also informed Abbot of a curious plan: "He intends soon to hire a musician, to be employed in selecting and instructing a band of forty of his negroes, that they may amuse him in his declining years, and attend him with mournful airs to his grave." It is hard to know how seriously this was meant.<sup>39</sup> There was, however, a serious purpose behind the private grave plot. As a Protestant Cornelio had to reckon with the harsh realities of religious discrimination. Until the 1870s thousands of Protestants were officially denied

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were at least in part imported illegally. Seven criollas are called mulatas; with the exception of a thirteen-year-old, they range from one to five. Why were they classified separately from origin and job classification? Why were there no mulatos? Children were often sold. Angerona's male children too? Who were the white fathers? Were they German overseers and technicians? [In his testament Cornelio acknowledged no children of "any class"; see fn 63.]

The name Ursula is not common in Spanish, but in addition to Ursula Lambert there was a thirty-five-year-old African woman and a three-year-old criolla of the same name. The name may have been given on the occasion of baptism. The liturgical feast and name's day of Ursula is the twenty-first of October.

<sup>38</sup> The 1838 inventory contains the striking statement that the infirmary building would amount to 16,631 pesos if its luxuriousness were taken into consideration, but in purely utilitarian terms it should be valued at only 6,000 pesos (du Bouchet, 64f.). (A batey is the Cuban name for the buildings, including the living quarters, of a coffee or sugar plantation.)

<sup>39</sup> According to Jorge du Bouchet, nobody knows whether these plans were ever put into effect (37). They motivated, however, Rigoberto López to give Afro-Cuban music and musicians a prominent role in the movie.

marriage, baptism and especially burial in consecrated grounds.<sup>40</sup> Cornelio may have paid lipservice to Catholicism, as other German Protestants did, to become a settled merchant and estate owner, but at the end he circumvented the ritual requirements of a Catholic burial.<sup>41</sup> As a plantation owner he apparently could choose to be buried on his own grounds. When he died on June 12, 1837 in the resort town Pueblo Jesus del Monte (near Havana), his friends and associates acted quickly. On June 16 the neighboring parish priest Manuel José Brita y Guerra (from Cayajabos, today Coyajabado) issued a certificate of interment stating that because of the rapid decomposition of the body permission had been given from higher authority to allow a private burial “without the office of remission ... and without the last sacraments which were neither administered nor requested “<sup>42</sup> On the same date Cornelio’s executors and heirs André(s) Souchay and Licenciado don Rafael Diaz handed his testament to Don Lorenzo de Larrazabal in the Escribania de Guerra in Havana, excusing themselves for their lateness by explaining that Cornelio’s body had to be quickly moved from Pueblo Jesus del Monte to his estate.<sup>43</sup> Thus, a solution seems to have been found for the problem of burying a French-Reformed planter.

#### 5. Angerona and its slave-owning neighbors in fact and fiction (as judged by Mary Peabody)

In describing Cornelio Souchay’s relatively humane practices, Abbot reports nothing about what he may have felt about slavery as an institution. There exists, however, another literary record about how his neighbors, Robert and Laurette Morrell, came to terms, differing from one another, with their existence as slave owners. Eventually there would even be a fictional treatment of Cornelio Souchay and Ursula Lambert. Abbot wrote his account of Angerona at the neighboring cafetal La Recompensa, where he had put himself under the care of his host, Dr. Robert Morrel, while exploring the environs.<sup>44</sup> In 1834/5, Abbot’s letters served Mary and Sophia Peabody (1806-1887, 1809-1871) as a guide to the island (274), when they spent more

<sup>40</sup> See Luis Martinez-Fernandez, “‘Don’t Die here’: The Death and Burial of Protestants in the Hispanic Caribbean, 1840-1885,” *The Americas*, 49:1 (1992): 23-47.

<sup>41</sup> Soon after Cornelio came to Cuba, the island, under its captain-general, was practically free from monarchical control in the wake of Napoleon’s invasion of Spain in 1808, and the captain-general could pursue his own arbitrary policies. Cornelio managed to establish himself as a merchant and to buy land in 1813, even before the Spanish Crown, after its restoration, promulgated in 1815 the Cédula de Gracias, which sought to attract Catholic foreigners with capital, slaves and technical knowledge (to Puerto Rico): “The majority of those who came to take advantage of this policy were French, but there were also a good number of Germans,” among them members of the Protestant Overmann family, who produced fake documents, willingly accepted by the local authorities, to prove their Catholic qualification. See Charles Theodore Overman, *A Family Plantation. The History of the Puerto Rican Hacienda “La Enriqueta”* (San Juan, PR: Academia Puertorriquena de la Historia, 2000), 13ff. A decree similar to the Cédula de Gracias was promulgated for Cuba two years later.

<sup>42</sup> See Jorge du Bouchet, “Testamento... y entierro de don Cornelio,” 42.

<sup>43</sup> See Jorge du Bouchet, “Coleccion de documentos,” 58.

than fifteen months at La Recompensa, Sophia as a paying patient, Mary as tutor to the teenage daughter Luisa, but mostly to the two younger sons Carlito and Eduardo (275).<sup>45</sup> Mary's acute observations of the horrors of slavery made her a committed abolitionist, while her sister closed her eyes.<sup>46</sup> The sisters, still before the years of their renown, wrote many letters from La Recompensa, and Mary began to fictionalize her painful experiences in an anti-slavery novel, "Juanita," published posthumously only in 1887 in order to protect the reputation of the Morrell family.<sup>47</sup> But the romance, named after the doomed "Moorish beauty," was supposed to reflect "real life in Cuba," as the subtitle indicated. Thus, the lines between fact and fiction remained blurred.<sup>48</sup>

Mary Peabody's letters make understandable her hesitation to publish the romance in the lifetime of the Morrells, since they vividly record on location what is later barely disguised in fiction. Mary reported to her sister Elizabeth back in Boston, drawing

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<sup>44</sup> Reporting home, he wrote on May 4, 1828: "This family, Dr. M's, in which I have spent, I think a fortnight or more and shall probably remain a week longer... is very delightful. The Doctor is probably the most successful physician in the country, making a fortune rapidly. Mrs. M. was the daughter of Col. T[ousard] the friend of Lafayette and Washington--speaking three languages with facility, as do her young children and their father" (194).

<sup>45</sup> Many of the letters are in the Berg Collection, MSS Mann, New York Public Library.

See Megan Marshall, *The Peabody Sisters. Three Women Who Ignited American Romanticism* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005), ch. 24, "Cuba Journals." Mary Peabody later married Horace Mann, Sophia Nathaniel Hawthorne, whereas Elizabeth remained the unmarried friend of many of the New England luminaries.

<sup>46</sup> Sophia: "I do not allow myself to dwell upon slavery for two reasons. One is, it would certainly counter the beneficent influences, which I have left home and country to court, and another is, that my faith in GOD makes me sure that he makes up to every being the measure of happiness which he loses thro' the instrumentality of others" (letter of March 16, 1834, Berg Collection and Badaracco, 61). In her first month, on Jan. 17, she reported in a matter-of-fact way that Morrell had lately bought several bozales (19).

In a letter to her mother Elisabeth (March 25, 2835, Berg Collection) Mary described how troubled she was by the ambiguities of infanticide and the punishments for which Mrs. Morrell tried to make excuses: "When I first heard that the mothers were so dreadfully punished for what might be an accident, it seemed to me that I never could look upon the Dr. again without feeling my blood run cold, and I confess I was relieved when I heard this [exculpatory] account given of the matter, though it is but another proof of the degradation of [the race]."

<sup>47</sup> Mary Peabody Mann, *Juanita. A Romance of Real Life in Cuba Fifty Years Ago*, Patricia M. Ard, ed. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000); originally published in 1887 by D. Lothrop Co. in Boston.

<sup>48</sup> An example of fiction following a real event is the account of a brutal whipping observed by the American visitor (Helen Wentworth) upon her arrival in the fictional plantation La Consolacion (Juanita, 33). This reflects an early experience of Mary Peabody's soon after arriving in La Recompensa (see letter # 25, May 13 or 14, 1834, Berg Collection, cf. Megan Marshall, 277).

a revealing portrait of the Morrells, their self-interested defense of slavery and of physical punishment:<sup>49</sup>

“Dr. M. is an excellent judge, intellectually speaking, of the state of nations – but I do not think he has their vital interest at heart in the least, provided his own coffee sells well – if he is accommodated in that matter he cares not who fights or who conquers – he is a man of no country as it were, and though he admires and is proud of America, he has not what I call *amor patriae*. Mrs. Morrell looks upon society very practically – not philosophically at all – she judges of people by their overt acts – and she judges very well considering her premises” (May 11, 1834, Berg Collection, folder # 24). Mrs. Morrell tried to defend her husband’s actions and her own inaction when she suspected Mary of judging her unjustly from a northern outsider’s perspective: “She said no words could ever tell what she had suffered – but that her principle had always been never to interfere. She said it was impossible for any one situated as I was to judge what was necessary to be done to preserve order – I told her I did not pretend to judge – and that it was not the amount of labour or even the necessary punishment that was the worst part of slavery to me – but the intense degradation of the race” (Aug. 21, 1834, Berg Collection).

As the letters from Cuba enumerate repetitively, there was much mutual visiting and dining and wining with the neighboring plantations.<sup>50</sup> Cornelio Souchay does not appear as guest or host, probably because of his ties with Ursula Lambert, but several names mentioned by the Peabody sisters also appear linked to Souchay in other contexts. Thus, “Monsieur Henri,” owner of the cafetal *Independencia*, turns out to be Don Nicolas Henrique, one of the two men “of friendship and confidence” (“*dos personas de su amistad y confianza*”) who appraised Cornelio’s estate after his death in 1837. With Don Jose Jacobo Lufriu of the cafetal *Buen Retiro* Cornelio Souchay undertook the appraisal of another estate. The friendly Mr. Morland in Havana appears to be a member (or family member) in the firm *Frias, Morland y Compania*, in which Souchay was a partner.

If Angerona was not part of the Peabody’s busy social (visiting) circle, it was quite possibly the site of an inspection tour.<sup>51</sup> In the romance it is easy to recognize the cafetal and its inhabitants in the guise of “*La Ascension*,” even if it is a composite picture. Mary was familiar with Abbot’s views on this “model plantation” (Juanita 72), but evidently knew more than his letters revealed, either from observation or hearsay.

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<sup>49</sup> Sophia Peabody (Feb. 28, 1834) provided her mother Elizabeth with some background to Mrs. Morrell, who “has the complexion of a Spaniard” (45), was born Laurette de Tousard in Saint-Domingue and grew up in New Orleans. Her father lost an arm in the American Revolution, went to France after a disagreement with Jefferson, and was appointed Consul in New Orleans by Napoleon. Marshall calls Morrell a “French doctor” (268).

<sup>50</sup> Mary and Sophia Peabody could move relatively freely among the estates, usually on horseback and in company. They did not have to experience the extreme restraints on women, especially foreigners, in Havana. See Luis Martinez-Fernandez, “Life in a ‘Male City’: Native and Foreign Elite Women in Nineteenth-Century Havana,” *Cuban Studies*, 25 (1995):27-49.

<sup>51</sup> I could not find any reference to Angerona in volumes I and II of the Cuban letters, mostly by Sophia Peabody, and some related folders in the Berg Collection, NYPL.

Abbot had mentioned Cornelio Souchay neither as a German nor a bachelor and Ursula Lambert not at all, but Mary lets her heroine Helen Wentworth meet not only the German “Count von Müller” but also the mulata “Mariana”; and she makes Helen’s hostess the Marquesa Rodriguez observe strikingly: “Count von Mueller rules five hundred slaves, and Mariana rules Count von Mueller” (72). The visit of the model plantation turns into a denouement, revealing the dark underside of the rational calculus of humane treatment.

The story unfolds thus:

“La Ascension, where the Marchioness proposed to make a call, was the residence of Count von Mueller, one of the few Germans to be met with in the island. The approach from this unique gateway was through an avenue of mango and tamarind trees.... When they drew up to the door, a huge turbaned head, surmounting a plump, handsome mulatto face, of proportionate dimensions, was thrust from a window, and as quickly withdrawn, but not till the beholders had had a full view of massive gold ear-pendants and necklace. In a few moments, the portly dame, arrayed in a flowing robe of fine white linen, richly embroidered, and trimmed with lace, stepped upon the gallery. Count von Mueller was not in the house, and a rabble of naked, black children, who ran across the gallery, were bid to seek him....

“Has he no family?” “Yes, if you can call half a dozen of these little yellow things a family. His lawful children are in Europe for their education, for his wife died before he came here, and he came to make money for them. But I doubt if he ever returns, for he has become quite a Creole in his domestic habits, and prides himself upon his model plantation.”<sup>52</sup>

Shocked as Helen was by what these habits appeared to be, she was glad to hear of a model plantation, and pleased herself with the hope that a man born outside of slavery institutions might have better conceptions of humanity than even an honorable Spaniard had risen to. ... In a few moments the Count von Mueller appeared, a stocky, dumpy German, with bald head and blue eyes. The Marquesa was a great favorite of his, because she admired his plantation, and was in the habit of bringing her guests to see his improvements... It was plain that the Count pursued a different policy from the ordinary one of the colonies to his negroes. Yet his wealth was the envy of all” (73).

But after praising the impressive nursery, hospital, glassed-in coffee picking room-- a description paralleling Abbot’s-- Mary introduces a brutal episode: the brutal and bloody training of a blood-hound set on two Negroes. This shatters the heroine’s illusions and makes her faint to the ground. In her author’s voice Mary concludes: “The Marchioness had admired the Count von Mueller for his benevolence, with apparent justice. But how can benevolence comport with the fact that a man brought up in free society goes to a slave-holding country for the purpose of making money at such a cost? The Count’s policy, as we have said, was to take care of his people’s health, for he thought that paid better in the end, and his benevolence to white men induced him to have

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<sup>52</sup> Insofar as Mary Peabody drew on the real Angerona, she may have relied on no more than hearsay in the Morrell family about Cornelio’s family. Instead of a late wife, Cornelio had a deceased sister in Germany, Charlotte Colin (1786-1822), to whose two surviving children he bequeathed one quarter of his estate in 1837. (These were Marie Louise, 1817-1887, and Charles, 1822-?, who ruined his father’s business and, changing his name, disappeared in the United States; see Doehner, 47, 217). A factual change occurred at Angerona, when Cornelio’s nephew André arrived in the fall of 1834.

his dogs well trained so that they need not fall upon any one but a fugitive; but the rules of his plantation were very rigid, the work he exacted very severe, the punishments for delinquency very terrible when they came.... even comfortable hospitals and picking rooms did not preclude the necessity of using force to extract the amount of labor required. .... The [count's] blue eyes could look soft and amiable upon an admiring friend, but they were pitiless when they looked upon the chattel whose blood and sinew he would transmute into gold" (75).

The frightful scene of a blood-hound and two slaves forced into a bloody confrontation may have happened elsewhere, but Mary Peabody wanted to expose the terrors ever present in even the most "model plantation." Intimidating hounds were certainly present at Angerona. Cornelio Souchay's successor André even arranged for Count Goertz's entertainment a mock pursuit by his dogs, forcing one of his slaves to play the role of the fugitive (Goertz, 227).

#### 6. Cirilo Villaverde and Jacinto de Salas y Quiroga tour Angerona: light and shadow

Two years after Cornelio's death, in 1839, two literary men visited Angerona, when it had fallen into André Souchay's hands and the traces of Ursula's hands had disappeared. Cirilo Villaverde (1812-1894), the first indigenous Cuban novelist, appeared together with the landscape painter Alejandro Moreau and the priest Francisco Ruiz, professor at the seminary of San Carlos. He too admired the physical layout of the plantation: "The main building is a magnificent work of art, evoking a Greek temple.... The whole estate is well laid out, everything conveniently separated, capacious, commodious and much of it luxurious."<sup>53</sup> With the recent arrival of André's wife Bertha and brother Hermann the plantation appeared to the two hispanic visitors to have an alien German ambiance. This overshadowed Cornelio and Ursula's legacy. In his "Romance of Angerona" Leonardo Padura reproached Villaverde for overlooking Ursula's labors: "In 1839 the morena was no longer at Angerona, and for Souchay's heirs that ingenious and beautiful woman never provided the guide which she had been during all those years for her pink (rosado) German."

With a satirical touch Villaverde recalled a meal in the dining room with the three German: "We talked until two at night with these taciturn and melancholy owners, who were trapped in this large room. Its walls were green from top to bottom, the dark furniture cast shadows everywhere, which the candles could not penetrate. The room had four doors, and the young German woman, who could not sit idle and still wore the clothing of her homeland, raced back and forth, appeared and disappeared like magic, doing this and that, without her steps being heard or the door making a creaking noise. Quite spontaneously this reminded me of similar scenes in the fantastic stories by E. T. A. Hoffmann. They transported me in spirit to countries that I had never visited. In fact, the whole hacienda has a foreign ambiance, the machines that save labor and time during planting and harvesting, the furniture, the prison, the hospital, the gardens—all demonstrate a foreign taste and entrepreneurial spirit and a retention of what was brought along—in short, it is thoroughly German."<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Quoted in Mendez, 279.

The other visitor in 1839 was the Spanish writer Jacinto de Salas y Quiroga (1813-1849), who saw much light and shadow: “The master of the establishment [Don André] received us with the greatest courtesy and urbanity. He gladly showed us around in all the buildings and explained to me not only the uses of each, but also the coffee operations with which he did me a special favor.” Salas considered the external setting something like a paradise on earth, but he also commiserated with the lot of the slaves. In Cuba this led to the suppression of the book he published in Madrid the following year. Salas lamented: “On that cafetal, I had occasion more than anywhere else to lament the state of complete ignorance in which its slaves are kept. One of the last operations in coffee production consists of laying down on a very spacious table great amounts of beans. Many negroes, sitting next to one another, sort the different classes and go through the chores of separating them. The room is built in an exceedingly nice fashion, long, narrow, enclosed with beautiful glass and sufficiently high. When we entered, a sepulchral silence reigned there, a silence that is never interrupted, as was explained to us. About 80 persons, women and men, are occupied with these monotonous chores.

And then it occurred to me that nothing would be easier than to spend those hours to the advantage of moral education of those wretched beings. The overseer, without ceasing his vigilance, could read aloud some book for this purpose. At the same time as he would attenuate the unhappiness of the poor wretches, the instruction could alleviate their misery.

But the sad truth is that there is a marked interest in treating this class of human beings increasingly worse than horses and oxen. Each time I heard talk of the progress of the island of Cuba, I remember, without being able to remedy it, the confusion of legislation, the disorder of justice, the shortages of colleges and schools, and lastly the harshness with which is treated that unlucky class snatched from Africa, infringing on all the laws of God and men.”<sup>55</sup>

## 7. The decline of Angerona and the downfall of the Souchay descendants

In the long run Cornelio Souchay’s ambitious project of a model cafetal of extraordinary scope proved to be an overinvestment. He bought his first land when

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<sup>54</sup> Quoted in Mendez, 269f., from *Excursion a Vuelta Abajo* (1839). The taciturnity of Hermann and Bertha Souchay may have been due at least in part to the fact that they had arrived in the country only a few months earlier and had not yet learned enough Spanish.

Villaverde and his companions also visited Cornelio’s grave that was flanked by cypresses and pines. The slave guide took off his sombrero and crossed his arms over his chest. Struck by this gesture, the visitors also removed their sombreros. Villaverde supposed that the second grave he noticed contained “a sister or some other relative” (quoted in du Bouchet, 37). This may have contributed to the misunderstanding that Cornelio lived with a sister, not Ursula Lambert (cf. fn 18). It is unclear who was buried next to Cornelio. Could it have been a member of the related Gatke family?

<sup>55</sup> Jacinto Salas y Quiroga, *Viajes* (Madrid: Boix, 1840), reprinted Havana: Consejo Nacional de Cultura, 1964, 180ff. Salas clearly engaged in wishful thinking when he suggested a reader. The overseer too was most likely illiterate. Mendez (287) comments on this passage that such a proposal was made by Rivero Muniz in *La Lectura en las Tabaqueras*.

coffee production seemed to have a great future, but the optimism did not survive the first generation of the planters who had come from Saint-Domingue. As early as 1839 André complained to Jacinto de Salas y Quiroga that in view of the sinking coffee prices and the high costs of maintenance, income could not match the “immense capital invested.” At the time of Goertz’s visit in 1845 more than one quarter of Angerona was already dedicated to sugar production. Rising Brazilian coffee exports and much higher returns from indigenous ingenios led to a precipitous decline of the cafetales. The huge expansion of the ingenios reshaped the landscape, turning the colorful “garden of Cuba” (San Marcos) into monotonous cane fields. The transition exacerbated the working and living conditions and forced the slaves to adjust or resettle and especially to endure nightlabor. Corporal punishment generally increased and led to more attempts at rebellion, which were also propelled by the extreme conditions of overcrowded “barracks life.” Some Cuban writers later idealized the coffee plantations because they appeared less terrible than the sugar plantations.<sup>56</sup> An early example is Villaverde’s *Cecilia Valdes*, which contrasts the brutal conditions of an ingenio with the milder ones in a cafetal.

As time went on, the ingenios relied, however, not blindly on their large slave workforce, but introduced many mechanical improvements and increased wage labor, not least in anticipation of the eventual ending of the flourishing illegal slave imports.<sup>57</sup> Cornelio himself was very interested in innovations. He used advanced mechanical dividers, and instead of the usual shipment in bags he packed the coffee beans in large caskets.<sup>58</sup> This explains the large coffee barrel in the middle of his coat of arms that he devised for his documents.<sup>59</sup> Toward the end of his life, but apparently not realizing its quick approach, he invested in a railroad project from Artemisa to the coast and Havana. He failed and suffered a considerable loss.<sup>60</sup> If he had succeeded, he would have built the first railroad line in all of South America. As it was, competitors opened the first line in 1837/38, but at the price of very high mortality not only for slaves but for the Irish and

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<sup>56</sup> Conditions on the cafetales seemed indeed to have been somewhat easier. See Knight, *Slave Society in Cuba*, 67ff.

<sup>57</sup> In his novel Villaverde describes a ploy by planters to dress Africans on a ship stopped by the British in work clothes and declare them transfers from Puerto Rico, which would have been legal.

<sup>58</sup> Abbot reports: “Mr. S. has a peculiarity in sending his coffee to market, to which he may be indebted for getting the highest price... To prevent [deterioration] he packs his coffee in large casks, neatly made by his own coopers, of atage wood, and iron bound. By this means it arrives at Havana and the most distant markets perfectly dry. In cleaning his coffee, he highly approves of Chartrand’s divider, and has half a dozen of them in use” (145).

<sup>59</sup> For a reproduction of Souchay’s escudo, see du Bouchet, “Testamento...,” 40.

<sup>60</sup> See du Bouchet, “La fortuna...,” 59. Cf. the fleeting reference to a railroad project in a letter by Sophia Peabody, June 12, 1834: “This morning the Dr.[Morrell] said at breakfast that he thought a railroad would actually be commenced between Havana & Rincon, a distance of fifteen miles. It will cost thirty thousand dollars per mile!” perhaps add book on rr construction in Cuba.

Canary Island contract workers, who were (mis)treated under army law.<sup>61</sup> Thereafter sugar production and railroad construction propelled one another.<sup>62</sup>

The settlement of Cornelio Souchay's estate was a long-drawn-out affair. It involved complex negotiations and agreement about the inheritance and the debts. The estate was appraised at half a million pesos as against 100,000 pesos in debts.<sup>63</sup> Abbot's listing of about 750,000 coffee trees and 450 slaves was confirmed, with some diminution. The value of 428 slaves was set at 133,000 pesos, an average of 310 pesos per person, with the craftsmen valued much higher. Approximately sixty per cent of the slaves came from Africa (Guinea).<sup>64</sup> Among them were seven *contramayorales*, mostly in their twenties and early thirties, who helped the (presumably) German mayoral keep the large workforce in check. Cornelio owned more slaves than was usual for coffee plantations, and the many children pointed to a very high internal replacement. His *cafetal* had the dimensions of the later *ingenios* and encompassed 40 *caballerias* (more than 40,000 acres).

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<sup>61</sup> See Friginals, *The Sugar Mill*, 135f.

<sup>62</sup> See Louis A. Perez, *Cuba Between Reform and Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 411.

<sup>63</sup> Sometime before 1831 Cornelio bought the title of a *Teniente Coronel de Milicias Disciplinadas* and subsequently was addressed in most documents as "colonel." A military title acquired by a civilian had the advantage, as Abbot explained, that it "exempts a man from liability to arrest for debt by the civil office, though, of course, he is subject to a military tribunal. Many commissions are purchased for the benefit of this privilege" (157).

<sup>64</sup> In 1817 slave import reached a high point with 34,500 Africans; the total in the five years from 1815 to 1820 amounted to 140,000. 1817 was also the year when Spain and England signed a treaty proclaiming the end of the legal slave trade in the Spanish colonies, effective May 1820. But in 1841 the number of slaves in Cuba was estimated at half a million, the result of continuous illegal imports. The average price of 310 pesos for Cornelio's slaves compares with an average price of 346 pesos for working-age slaves in 1845, "nearly one-third lower than the 1821 peak of 516.... After 1821, as it became evident that the 1817 treaty was a dead letter, prices for working-age slaves declined almost continuously for two decades." See Laird W. Bergad, Fe Iglesias Garcia and Maria Del Carmen Barcia, *The Cuban Slave Market 1790-1880* (Cambridge UP, 1995), 52.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century Cuba experienced the "Second Slavery," a reaction to the English policy of slave emancipation and the outlawing of the international slave trade. Dale Tomich has shown that emancipation was not unilinear and slavery indeed increased in Cuba and the American South. On the "Second Slavery," see Tomich, *Through the Prism of Slavery. Labor, Capital, and the World Economy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), ch. 3.

Unmarried and without issue,<sup>65</sup> Cornelio had only one living brother, Esaye (Esay, Esaie, 1782-1861), owner of the Wintershagen estate (in Holstein) near Lübeck, when he had to give thought to who should inherit Angerona and perpetuate his life's work. Although he never seems to have visited his homeland again, he maintained his family ties. In 1835 he bequeathed to his brother three quarters of the estate (but not all of his business assets) and one quarter to the children of his late sister Charlotte Colin. Among his executors he named at first Enrique Gatke (Heinrich Gätke), but released him in 1837 from that responsibility while making him a lesser heir. To Enrique's son Cornelio, his own godson, he left a pension for the years of his education until he turned twenty-five.<sup>66</sup> But the most urgent problem was not the formal inheritance but the practical continuance. Who would run Angerona? The two brothers agreed that André Souchay, Esaye's son, should go to Angerona and prepare himself to run the plantation. In 1834 Cornelio met his twenty-two-year-old nephew whom he had never seen before. In the first testament of 1835, André does not yet appear as executor and heir, but he is named in 1837. After Cornelio's death he returned briefly to his father's Wintershagen estate and fetched his bride Bertha Hesse (1816-1889) and his brother Hermann (1813-1872).<sup>67</sup> The two brothers had worked for several years on the family estate. They came from a well-to-do bourgeois milieu and grew up in less troubled times than Cornelio, whose father had bankrupted his family. They were unprepared for the realities of a slave plantation, although they were accustomed to the servile farmworkers of Holstein, just as Bertha Hesse, whose father leased an estate, was familiar with the extremely backward conditions of her native Mecklenburg, where serfdom had been officially abolished only very recently. Both brothers had not gained any experience abroad. The Cuban "culture shock" seems to have exacerbated their German preconceptions.

In the wake of Cornelio's death, settling the inheritance and the debts dragged on for years. Cornelio's old partner Rafael Diaz and André Souchay, both executors, persuaded the German heirs to reinvest their shares in a new sugar plantation, to which

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<sup>65</sup> In his testament of 1835 Cornelio declared that he "had no children nor recognized any of any sort" (no tengo ni reconozco hijos de ninguna clase). Perhaps the latter is not totally free of ambiguity. See J. du Bouchet, "Testamento," 38.

<sup>66</sup> Enrique Gatke is very likely Heinrich Gätke, a prominent merchant from Hamburg, who in 1839 made a donation to the construction of the Hermann monument near Bielefeld and in 1842 another one for the rebuilding of Hamburg after the catastrophic fire. He appears in comments by Renate Hauschild-Thiessen, editor of *Ein Hamburger auf Kuba. Briefe und Notizen des Kaufmanns Alfred Beneke 1842-1844* (Hamburg: Gesellschaft der Bücherfreunde, 1971), 13 and 63f. Enrique Gatke and Cornelio Souchay obviously had a close personal relationship; in business they may have collaborated in shipping coffee to Hamburg and other places.

<sup>67</sup> Hermann Souchay was perhaps willing to leave his homeland because of a social liability. With Catharina Buchwald (1806-1873) he had an illegitimate daughter, Margarethe (1832-1872), Otto Doehner's grandmother.

A relative considered the Cuban situation very dubious and uttered a negative, if uninformed opinion: "The two oldest of [Esay Souchay's] three sons went overseas, André und Hermann, in order to run a Cuban plantation 'Angerona,' which a relative had left behind at his death with high debts amidst the complicated Spanish conditions" (Wilhelm Souchay, *Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben*, Privatdruck, 1906, 38).

one hundred of its slaves were commandeered.<sup>68</sup> In view of the general decline of the cafetales and the resulting threat to the value of Angerona, this was a shrewd move. The ingenio “Arco Iris” (Rainbow), established in 1841 and valued at 150,000 pesos in 1845, seems to have served as the main carrier of Cornelio’s debts, with the “curious result” (du Bouchet López, 61) that a sugar plantation appeared among the assets of which Cornelio could not have known anything. In 1841 an agreement was reached for apportioning the whole estate, one third going to Rafael and André and the other two thirds to the heirs in Germany according to the provisions of 1837, but it is doubtful that the latter ever benefited financially. When Esay Souchay divided his own estate in 1856, he gave all his Cuban shares to André’s widow Bertha Hesse and his other son Hermann. André, surviving Cornelio by sixteen years, had died in 1853 at only forty-one years of age. Hermann, remaining unmarried, had to take over more responsibilities, but returned to Germany in the early sixties and died, mentally or physically ailing, in a sanatorium (Heilanstalt) in 1872. He left when Bertha’s children had grown up. Cornelio Souchay y Hesse (1841-1902) ran the enterprise which since at least 1863 produced only sugar, together with Henrique Gatke, (presumably) a son of the first Enrique Gatke. Henrique became Bertha’s son-in-law, when he married Carlota Souchay y Hesse (1845-after 1898) in 1865.<sup>69</sup> The Souchays continued to modernize. In 1870 an article in *Ilustracion Espanola y Americana* pictured a model sugar plant (central) which they established in the vicinity and which was presumably worked mostly by wage labor.

In the third generation the first Souchays married Catholic Creole partners. In fact, they themselves counted as first-born Creoles of German descent. Nothing is known about how much or whether they differed from the racist views held by their father. In 1862 Louisa Souchay y Hesse (1842-1896) married Francisco Chappotin y Cobarrubias, son of the owner of the sugar central El Pilar in Artemisa. In 1875 her brother Cornelio, taking his time at age thirty-four, married Angelica Zambrana y Perez (1859-1892), half his age, a daughter of the famous Cuban poetess Luisa Perez y Montes de Oca.<sup>70</sup> In a

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<sup>68</sup> The ingenio was established on an abandoned corral (Gonzalo), comprising about 30 and later 40 caballerias, in the district of Alacranes (Matanzas), to the east of Angerona. The land was bought by Rafael Diaz, André Souchay and Enrique Gatke. The transfer of a hundred slaves (worth at least 40,000 pesos) would explain why only 320 slaves were left on Angerona when Goertz visited in 1845; Goertz does not mention the complicated debt issues.

Dalia Acosta’s report on Maria del Carmen Barcia’s paper (see fn 18) ends with the claim that Ursula’s renunciation of her claim to 20,000 pesos enabled the heirs to convert Angerona gradually into an ingenio. This may actually refer to the establishment of “Arco Iris.” Ursula Lambert presumably did not welcome the decline of coffee production.

<sup>69</sup> Some evidence for the close association is that in 1868 Bertha, Cornelio and Enrique sued Francisco Careaga over the closing of a pathway. See Mendez, 272.

<sup>70</sup> Cornelio seems to have met Angelica in Artemisa. A few months after the marriage, Angelica’s aunt Julia died there after having established a Municipal Academy for the education of girls. Luisa (1835- ) and Julia (1839-1875) Perez y Montes de Oca were both well-known poets associated with nationalist circles fighting for Cuban independence. Born on the plantation Melgarejo near Cobre (Oriente), they later lived in Havana. When Julia contracted tuberculosis, she retreated to the rural setting of Artemisa.

sense, however, integration into the Spanish-Creole elite came too late. Since 1870 the Spanish government kept promising the gradual phasing out of slavery. The Ten Years' War in Oriente province from 1868 to 1878 did not directly affect Angerona, but various forms of more or less coercive wage labor, "white," "black" and "yellow" (Chinese) emerged, driven in part by the technology of sugar production.<sup>71</sup> Slavery disintegrated in many regions in the years before its final outlawing in 1884. It is not clear when Angerona's large slave quarter (barracón), the ruins of which still impress visitors today, emptied out, how gradually or how precipitously. In 1883 Bertha Souchay divided the lands of Angerona among her three children, with Carlota and Henrique acquiring the arcaded complex and the cemetery. Bertha had arrived on Angerona in its most prosperous period in 1838; she lived through its gradual decline and died half a century later, in 1889, as it neared its end. The civil war of the nineties, which devastated all of Cuba and destroyed the Creole planter class, led her children to precipitate flight, deeper debt and final loss of the property. The "villa" burned down and the graves were robbed. The social descent was fast. Bereft of a dowry, all five daughters of Cornelio and Angelica remained unmarried; two of them, Berta and Margarita, were assisted by an honorary government pension on account of their famous grandmother. After fleeing to Havana, three of Louisa and Francisco's daughters had to help support the family as seamstresses in Havana. The younger generation of males in all three families found work in middling positions in commerce and the civil service.

Thus ends the three-generation story of the rise and fall of Angerona. Cornelio Souchay was the founder of what was in several senses an extraordinary coffee plantation. Ursula Lambert was important to him and his enterprise. But the full extent of their personal relationship may remain hidden by the finger on the lips of the Goddess, unless future discoveries can break the silence.

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See Luisa Perez de Zambrana, *Poesias completas (1853-1918)* (Havana, 1957) and Julia Perez Montes de Oca, *Poesia* (Havana, 1981). In 1858 Luisa married Ramon Zambrana (1817-1866), Professor of Medicine at the U. of Havana.

<sup>71</sup> See Rebecca Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba. The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).