



**Carlos Benigno Baliño y López** was born on February 13th, 1848 in Guanajay, an ancient city in western Cuba that belonged to Pinar del Río Province from 1879, currently in Artemisa Province. He studied book keeping, architecture, entered San Alejandro Painting Academy in 1868, but did not finish any of these studies. He collaborated with articles and poems in *El Fénix*, *El Alacrán* and *La Crítica*, of Guanajay. He moved to the United States after failing in his attempts to find work in Havana. He lived in Key West, Tampa, New York and New Orleans.

In 1926 he died of natural death at the age of 78 years. The newspaper *El Boletín*, in honor to him, left as an epitaph for the grave of the disappeared combatant an article entitled "The fall of the oak", which sentenced in one of its paragraphs: "The workers of Cuba and especially the communists, have lost one of their best militants".

### **Political activity.**

Between 1868 and 1869 he developed a great revolutionary activity. He was a member of the Tobacco-Selectors' Guild in Key West, participated in the labor movement and collaborated in *El Yara*. He helped found Ibor City in Tampa, co-founded, with Ramón Rivero, the first labor union, Knights of Labor, and also founded two lodges.

He returned to Key West, where he became editor of the newspaper *The People's Tribune*, there he carried out propaganda work for the freedom of Cuba and the working class. He returned to Tampa again, to found the Union and Fraternity lodge. In 1892 he met José Martí in Key West and signed the bases and the act of constitution of the Cuban Revolutionary Party founded by Martí. He was president of the Francisco Vicente Aguilera Club. He took an active part in the Enrique Roig and April 10th clubs in Tampa, founded in January 1893.

In Tampa he collaborated with Pablo Rousseau on the founding of *The New Republic* (1897) and worked as a collector or fundraiser at Jacksonville tobacco factories.

After all these years in the United States, he developed an intense work of political propaganda with Martí and other emigration figures, both in the organizations and institutions he founded and in which he collaborated, as in the press and the tribune. Some of those participations were collected in Patria Newspaper, founded by Martí and where he was enriched with the experience of working as a tobacco worker.

In 1898 after finishing the war against Spain he returned to Cuba. In 1902 he published articles in the press against economic abuse. By this time he continued his political activity, especially in the organization of the Labor Party (1904), transformed at his behest into the Socialist Labor Party and with his works in The Voice of the Working Class, party organ, where he published an article in support to the Russian Revolution in 1905.

He signed the constitution of the Socialist Party of Cuba in 1906, arising from the recast of the Socialist Workers Party and the International Socialist Association, also created with his contribution. In 1910, while being a member of the Socialist Association of Havana, he became president, replacing Ramón Belmonte; after the most prominent workers in the Havana Sewer Strike were expelled from the country.

By this time, he collaborates in The Socialist, organ of the aforementioned Association. He also collaborated, in addition to the already mentioned publications in The Producer, The Cigarette Worker, Justice, and Class Struggle, where he was also director. From 1919 he contributes to reorganize the small socialist groups into communist groups.

In 1922 he held the direction of Spartacus, the position of proofreader of Cigar-Maker Bulletin and of Youth magazine, directed by Julio Antonio Mella, whom he had met that same year in the printing press in which both publications were issued. He founded the Communist Party with Mella and other militants in 1925. In addition to his speeches and propaganda works in the press, he cultivated the story.