

Toponymy is the discipline that studies the origin and meaning of place names (toponyms) and their relations with the current language of the country or other countries or with the primitive languages that have already disappeared, as well as the set of names of a place.

- **Buey Arriba**

Buey Arriba, is the name given to the town located in the southern region of Granma province and the northern slope of the Sierra Maestra. At the beginning of the century it was called Minas del Sur or Minas de Bueycito, since its origin was due to the exploitation of the manganese mines that existed there and that in the middle of the century, already inactive, led to its beginning to be called Buey Arriba.

With the political-administrative division, it acquired the category of municipality, of which it is the head, emerging in 1976. Its name appears in the Toponymic and Geographical Nomenclature of Cuba from 1860 -1872 to designate various places in the area of the foothills and the firm of the Sierra Maestra, south of the city of Bayamo.

- **Yara**

Yara's name is of aboriginal origin and has not undergone any mutation over time. Its spelling has been the same since the 16th century. The population was founded by the aborigines in the valleys of the river of the same name.

There are hypotheses related to the origin of the name of the territory.

Three versions:

First: the name comes from the cultivation of cassava and the cassava production process where yare (yucca juice) is extracted.

Second: related to the name of the river.

Third: related to the Indian Yara, wife of Cacique Hatuey.

- **Cauto Cristo**

The lands occupied by the current municipality belonged at the time of the colony and the neo-colony to the jurisdictions of Jiguaní and Holguín. It was not until June 9, 1963 that Cauto Cristo was established as a municipality, with its unique history linked to the

longest river in Cuba and frequent scene of independence struggles during the 19th century.

With the new administrative political division in 1976, this territory would become one of the 13 municipalities of the Granma province.

- **Jiguani**

The municipality owes its origin to San Pablo de Jiguani Village (Río de oro -golden river- in aboriginal language), founded on January 25, 1701.

It was constituted as a Villa during the colonization process as one of the last Indian towns on the Island of Cuba, the fact is attributed to a mestizo descendant of the natives, Miguel Rodríguez, supported by his brother Domingo (sons of Indian and Spanish), and the parish priest Don Andrés de Jerez y Mejías. The main groups of households settled where the current historic center is located, thus the San Pablo de Jiguani parish arises on April 15, 1700, which is officially established in January 1701, granting it in 1740 by the royal order the title of Very Faithful Villa San Pablo de Jiguani.

The historical event became a tradition and since then January 25 is the date on which the patron San Pablo is honored and worshiped and together with the religious festivities a wide variety of socio-cultural activities are developed that reinforce the roots of our inhabitants for its culture and the defense of its idiosyncrasy.

- **Pilón**

Pilón is the head town of the municipality of the same name, belonging to the province of Granma, located 42 km east of Cabo Cruz.

Currently there are three versions about the origin of the name of this municipality:

The first settlement that existed in Pilón was in the Piloncito area. And that later, due to the increase in population, they moved further east and settled in the current area and then it is called Pilón.

The older people of Pilón say that it gets its name because it is a hole, because from anywhere you enter the town from the descent (Pilón is the instrument for making coffee powder) from there it receives its name in that way.

Also through a company that existed whose name was Pílon, Cape Cruz bought these lands from that company.

- **Media Luna**

As a result of the start of the Ten Years' War, the Spanish colonial government decided to group the peasant population of this area into a kind of "camps". The only town of importance that existed in the south of Guacanayabo was Vicana Abajo. From there, an extensive region was directed politically and administratively, ranging from the south bank of the Tana River to Cabo Cruz. A part of the rural population was located at a point on the coast of Guacanayabo known as Manáguano, next to a coastal swamp that is located between the current urban centers of Media Luna and Niquero. More than 300 families from the districts of Guá and Vicana gathered there, fleeing from the fields due to the excesses of the Spanish troops. On Saturday 1st, May 1869, the small human group settled, a Spanish military camp together with the group of families mentioned above, at a point on the coast, a little further north and that long before was known by sailors as Ensenada de Media Luna, according to its geographical shape. There was a pier known by the name of Sibanicú where the products that came from Vicana Abajo and other haciendas were shipped.

The Ensenada de Media Luna extends from the mouth of the Vicana River to the place where the old pier was, where today the border guard tower is located. It was common to give these names to coastal geographical features that served as a reference in an area where traffic was generally maritime. In the Media Luna Cove, a small human group settled that over the years became known as Pueblo Viejo, constituting the first population center of what is now known as the Media Luna municipality.

- **Manzanillo**

Villa del Puerto Real de Manzanillo or Manzanillo. City known as the Pearl of Guacanayabo, of the current Cuban province of Granma. This population must have had its origin in the Royal Order of July 18, 1792, communicated to this Government by His Excellency Mr. Don Luis de las Casas on October 31 of the same year, by which it was recommended to make a small [population] at the point where the Magdalena war schooner destroyed the establishments that the English had for the sacks of wood and cattle, and by virtue of which the dry docks that they had formed were destroyed.

The name of the city was due to the abundant presence in its lands, at the time of the Spanish Conquest, of *Hipomane Mancinella*, the scientific name with which Manzanillo is now designated, a poisonous

shrub with whose latex the Araucas of northeastern Venezuela, settlers of Cuba, they poisoned their darts; however, it was not the aborigines who gave such a name -Manzanillo-, to the aforementioned plant; it was the Spaniards, so given to the diminutive, who adorned the name because the appearance of its fruits brought them -from across the sea-, the memory of a tree as common as it is paradigmatic of ancient Europe: the Manzanillo Olive Tree, producer of the Chamomile olive.

- **Guisa**

San José de Guisa is officially founded on August 16, 1765, with the presence of Governor Casas Cagigal. Converge in this fact the internal colonization that takes place in the region stimulated by the tobacco plantations and the economic and social interests of the founder, José Antonio de Silva y Ramírez de Arellano, militia colonel and perpetual alderman of the Bayamo City Council.

In 1774, Carlos III, King of Spain, granted Silva y Ramírez the title of Marquis of Guisa, in response to his efforts to promote the town with his own resources. Such a rank of nobility gave rise to one of the five vassal lordships of the Island. With the creation of the Town Hall (1775), the tobacco factory and the assembly of a sugar mill, the boom in the first decades became, evidently considered by Joaquín Infante Silva to place Guisa next to Bayamo and Port-au-Prince with the right to one of the five deputies of the legislative power in his Republican Constitution project, the first document of this kind in the history of Cuba.

Like other regions of Cuba, Guisa was populated by aborigines. At the end of 1512, the troops of Diego Velázquez, commanded by the troops of Pánfilo de Narváez, arrived at the place that would later become San Salvador de Bayamo Village, holding some skirmishes with the Indians, many of whom escaped to the outskirts from Bayamo: El Datil, Correa and Santa Bárbara, these last two localities belonging to the municipality of Guisa. The aboriginal stage, in our municipality has characterized the aboriginal presence, as nomadic or flying tribes that lived for a short time in certain areas such as Las Cajitas, Arroyo Blanco, the Santa Bárbara Caves and on the banks of Bayamo river in San José, Bombón, Ortega and Manacal, as evidenced by the objects found, such as a mortar and pestle, stone axes, simple irregular and solid with depression, spiral spoon, caves with pictographs and a ceremonial object.

- **Bayamo**

On November 5, 1513, the town of San Salvador was founded in the

vicinity of the Yara River, moving in 1514 to the Indian chiefdom of Bayam, where there was a population of more than two thousand inhabitants. An area of rich nature, with a rebellious and indomitable spirit, it became the scene of the first clashes between Spaniards and natives since before its foundation, because the chief Hatuey had already alerted them to the true intentions of the conquerors.

It is known that the word "Bayamo" is a word of Indian origin, and that it comes from the word "bayam", name given by the aborigines to the "tree of wisdom", in whose shade the beasts themselves remain under it, they become meek as lambs; and it is also known that Bayamo was a Siboney region.

- **Río Cauto**

We are the product of the proto-agricultural aboriginal cultural group, which more than 4,500 years ago moved from the current territory of the United States to western Cuba. It lived first on the North coast of Matanzas and Las Villas, 500 years later it moved to the Eastern region, populating the Cauto Valley and the Gulf of Guacanayabo. In the Cauto region it evolved towards higher phases in its Economic and Social development, venturing into the work of ceramics, they had a magical religious world, their burials were in a common and sacred place, these aborigines also worked in the stone industry and lived mainly from fishing and gathering.

In the Cauto basin they established settlements in Almiquí, Aguas Verdes, Guamito, Portezuela and El Mango, in the last place they made profuse burials, where they deposited offerings with gouges and basins of fish vertebrae.

The greatest qualitative leap in the aboriginal communities that inhabited the Cauto Valley was caused by the migrations of the Arawaks, who arrived in the eastern geography in the 6th century from Haiti and Santo Domingo. Here they found an excellent region to settle down for having abundant waterways and fertile soils.

The place name Cauto designates the Río Cauto municipality and the towns of Cauto Embarcadero, Cauto el Paso; Cauto la Yaya and the Plain of Cauto.

- **Niquero**

It is a municipality and city in the province of Granma, Cuba. It is located in the coastal region of the province, along with other municipalities that border the Gulf of Guacanayabo.

It is unknown by whom or when these properties began to be called Niquero, it may be a word from the insular Arauco, an aboriginal voice that identified our ancestors, manifested in the “Ni” that means water and “Que” land; but up to now a finished historical conclusion cannot be reached; but it can be affirmed, according to the documents, that already in 1619 it was known by the name of Niquero.

Its first inhabitants were the aboriginal communities, which from May 1494 had contact with the Europeans, producing a process of transculturation that little by little absorbed the aboriginal culture, predominating then the Spanish one. In this region, the presence of aboriginal communities was reported from important archaeological finds, as well as the specific places where they lived, made up of pictographs, ceremonial caves and their own deities, in addition to the existence of fishing-gathering communities.

- **Bartolomé Masó**

This municipality has the special privilege of the richness of its history, heart of the rebel territory and shelter of the General Command of La Plata. The Camilo Cienfuegos School City was built here, the first great educational work built by the Revolution in the country. This territory combines in its plains and mountains the memories of a large part of the most transcendental events of our national history together with an incessant development, a reflection of the most important socio-economic goals of the country.

The Masó territory owes its name to the distinguished Cuban patriot Bartolomé Masó Márquez, Major General of the Mambi army, last President of the Republic in Arms, fighter in the three Mambi wars for the independence of Cuba.

The current Granma municipality of Bartolomé Masó emerged with the new Administrative Political Division of 1976 and is located in the south central zone of the eastern Cuban province of Granma, it has a territorial extension of 634.6 km², occupying 7.5% of the surface of the province, fourth place among municipalities.

The history of the municipality of Bartolomé Masó dates back to the aboriginal community and the process of struggle for the independence of Cuba to the present day, a period that has required the inhabitants of this homeland to thoroughly measure themselves and put their ingenuity and integrity to the test together with a strong dose of sacrifice.

- **Campechuela**

Campechuela owes its name to the demographic relations, both with the areas of Guá and with the areas surrounding the Gulf of Campeche, in Yucatan.

According to data provided, the town of Campechuela existed in the area known as Guá. There lived groups of indigenous people who called a place by the name of Campeches, for them this toponym was synonymous with field. It was very difficult for Campeches to lead to what is now Campechuela, considering that the descendants of the Indians came down from the mountains to the port areas and settled there, and then the area was populated by inhabitants of Spanish origin.

In addition, after the war of 1968, its original inhabitants began to emigrate and the town changed its name to Campeche. This indicates that although there is a phonic relationship, there are no reasons to suppose that the indigenous name derived from Campechuela, since there was already a gulf and a town with the same name in the Yucatan Peninsula at the time.

It seems that in the area of primitive Campeche there were trade relations of a timber nature with the Campeche wood –wood from a leguminous tree from America, capable of giving a beautiful polish– with some areas bordering the gulf of the same name. In 1951, populations with aboriginal features were found near Yara, when investigating their origin, they answered that it was due to the descendants of Yucatecans brought by the Spanish as slaves, centuries ago.

This indicates the probability of a link from the area of the southeastern coast with the Yucatan Peninsula. Thus, the new town of Campeche, which emerged after 1878, owed its name both to the wood and to the relations with the Mexican Campeche. Shortly after it adopted the name derived from Campechuela.