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# RUPERT

*A Tale in Black and White*

# GRAY

**BY STEPHEN NATHANIEL COBHAM**

*With an Introduction by* **SELWYN R. CUDJOE**

THE CUDJOE COLLECTION OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO LITERATURE



ABOUT THE NOVEL—

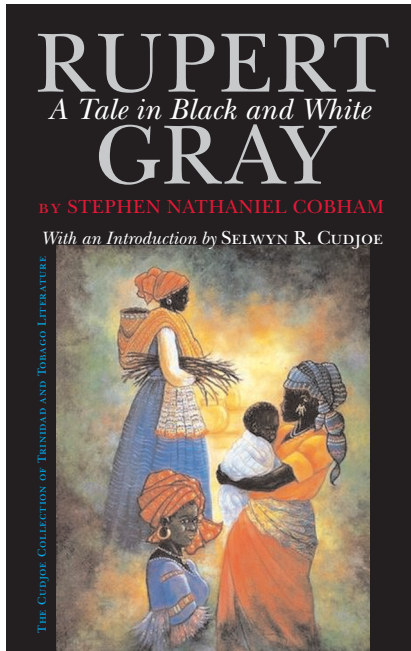
*Rupert Gray*, a novel about black consciousness and racial uplift in Trinidad, was written when ideas of Pan Africanism began to take hold in Trinidad and Tobago. Set during the first decade of the twentieth century, the novel explores a love relationship between Rupert Gray (African/black) and Gwendoline Serle (European/white) and the tragedy that unfolds as they seek to express their love for each other in a society that has definite notions of how members of each race ought to behave. Drawing on Shakespeare's *Othello*, Stephen Nathaniel Cobham explores the social and psychological implications of this "tale in black and white" as his subtitle suggests. The happy ending of the novel does not detract from the heart-rending episodes in this beautifully-written story. Professor Selwyn R. Cudjoe notes in his introduction: "*Rupert Gray* signifies what Afro-Trinbagonians were thinking about their society and their destiny...It also demonstrates that Afro-Trinbagonians were part of a larger diasporic discourse about race and identity...Rupert Gray becomes a foundational text in any study that wishes to examine how Africans in a small colonial society thought about race and racial uplift. It also speaks to the international influence of Booker T. Washington and his philosophy had on African people around the globe and the psychological impact of racism on the making of a Caribbean person."

STEPHEN NATHANIEL COBHAM, a dedicated Pan Africanist and enthusiastic follower of Sylvester Williams, father of Pan Africanism, was the Head-Teacher or Principal of Woodbrook E.C. School, Trinidad, from 1891 to 1901.

SELWYN R. CUDJOE, a professor of Africana Studies at Wellesley College, is the author of *Beyond Boundaries: The Intellectual Tradition of Trinidad and Tobago*.

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