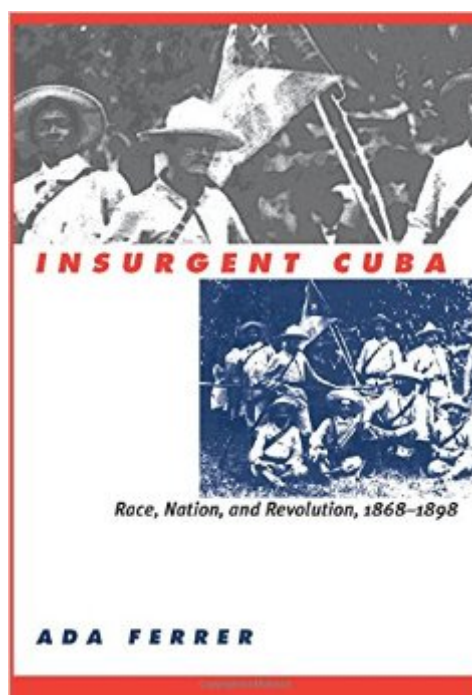


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Insurgent Cuba: Race, Nation, And Revolution, 1868-1898



Synopsis

In the late nineteenth century, in an age of ascendant racism and imperial expansion, there emerged in Cuba a movement that unified black, mulatto, and white men in an attack on Europe's oldest empire, with the goal of creating a nation explicitly defined as antiracist. This book tells the story of the thirty-year unfolding and undoing of that movement. Ada Ferrer examines the participation of black and mulatto Cubans in nationalist insurgency from 1868, when a slaveholder began the revolution by freeing his slaves, until the intervention of racially segregated American forces in 1898. In so doing, she uncovers the struggles over the boundaries of citizenship and nationality that their participation brought to the fore, and she shows that even as black participation helped sustain the movement ideologically and militarily, it simultaneously prompted accusations of race war and fed the forces of counterinsurgency. Carefully examining the tensions between racism and antiracism contained within Cuban nationalism, Ferrer paints a dynamic portrait of a movement built upon the coexistence of an ideology of racial fraternity and the persistence of presumptions of hierarchy.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As a professor of Latin American and Caribbean history at New York University, Ada Ferrer's research focuses upon the social dimensions of themes such as race, slavery, nationalism, and revolution. In her first novel *Insurgent Cuba*, Ferrer tells the story of the thirty-year multiracial movement for Cuban independence. She examines the participation of black and mulatto Cubans in

the nationalist insurgency from 1868-1898. Through this investigation Ferrer notes the aspirations and limitations of citizenship and nationality for African Cubans. In her analysis Ferrer demonstrates that the enlistment of former slaves fueled the revolution, but consequently permitted the Spanish and later the Americans to expose racial issues, which then undermined the goals of Cuba libre. Ferrer's social account is organized chronologically and broken up into three sections. The first piece of the narrative is dedicated to the Ten Year's (1868-1879) war and the Guerra Chiquita (1879-1880). Ferrer describes the combination of racial and nationalist factors that led to the rapid enlistment of slaves and Spain's success in characterizing the rebellion as a race war. The second segment of Insurgent Cuba analyzes the peace between the Guerra Chiquita and the final rebellion. During this period (1880-1895) insurgents disassociated the issue of race from the revolution and promoted the image of a raceless Cuba. The third section discusses the final war for independence. The rhetoric of racial egalitarianism played a strong role in the ultimate insurgency, (1895-1898) but the peace that followed failed to end racial inequality in Cuba.

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