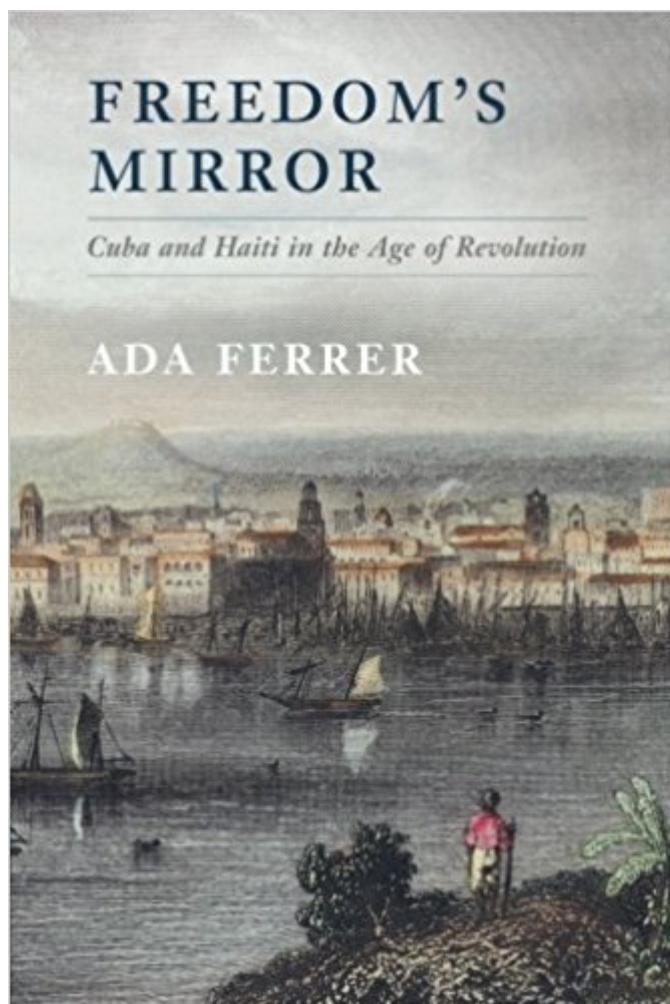


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Freedom's Mirror: Cuba And Haiti In The Age Of Revolution



Synopsis

During the Haitian Revolution of 1791-1804, arguably the most radical revolution of the modern world, slaves and former slaves succeeded in ending slavery and establishing an independent state. Yet on the Spanish island of Cuba barely fifty miles distant, the events in Haiti helped usher in the antithesis of revolutionary emancipation. When Cuban planters and authorities saw the devastation of the neighboring colony, they rushed to fill the void left in the world market for sugar, to buttress the institutions of slavery and colonial rule, and to prevent "another Haiti" from happening in their own territory. *Freedom's Mirror* follows the reverberations of the Haitian Revolution in Cuba, where the violent entrenchment of slavery occurred at the very moment that the Haitian Revolution provided a powerful and proximate example of slaves destroying slavery. By creatively linking two stories - the story of the Haitian Revolution and that of the rise of Cuban slave society - that are usually told separately, Ada Ferrer sheds fresh light on both of these crucial moments in Caribbean and Atlantic history.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Winner, 2015 Frederick Douglass Book Prize, sponsored by the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition at Yale University *Freedom's Mirror* offers "a fresh perspective and links these two nations together in a complex web, in which sugar slavery declined in Haiti just as it rose in Cuba," commented the jury. "Ferrer's research is most impressive, she fills her pages with proslavery Cuban generals, African slaves in both colonies, refugee French Negroes, and Haitian leaders who hoped to weaken slavery on the

islands that surrounded them. Freedom's Mirror will force even specialists to reconsider this era," At the same time, "one of Ferrer's greatest successes is her rendering of the complex politics in a beautifully written and understandable way that will be readily followed by readers with minimal knowledge of nineteenth-century Cuba, Haiti, and the Spanish Caribbean." The Frederick Douglass Book Prize was established in 1999 to stimulate scholarship in the field of slavery and abolition by honoring outstanding books on the subject. The award is named for Frederick Douglass (1818-1895), the slave who escaped bondage to emerge as one of the great American abolitionists, reformers, writers, and orators of the nineteenth century. Winner, 2015 Friedrich Katz Prize from the American Historical Association for the best book in Latin American History Ada Ferrer has crafted a work of remarkable insight and methodological brilliance. Many evoke Haiti's hemispheric significance as an impulse for liberation and conservative re-entrenchment; no one so meticulously traces the interdependencies of freedom and enslavement, incorporating diplomatic, military, and social history as well as extraordinarily imaginative textual analysis. Ferrer's chapter on the Aponte rebellion is a tour de force, ingeniously unraveling the enigmatic strands that bound Haiti, Cuba, and the African diaspora in the Age of Revolution. Winner, 2015 James Rawley Prize from the American Historical Association for the best book in Atlantic World History Winner, 2015, Wesley Logan Prize from the American Historical Association for the best book in the History of the African Diaspora Winner, 2015, Haiti Illumination Prize from the Haitian Studies Association for the best book in Haitian Studies Honorable Mention, PROSE Award in European and World History, Association of American Publishers "This remarkable book addresses a fundamental paradox in the history of the Atlantic World: plantation slavery retrenched and intensified even as antislavery politics scored its first great triumph. The Haitian revolution offered the world a beacon of freedom, but it also stimulated an economic, political, and philosophical reaction, exemplified in the consolidation of slavery on an unprecedented scale in neighboring Cuba. With precision and passion, Ferrer shows how liberation and bondage made and unmade one another. Exhaustively researched and beautifully written, this is a masterwork of analytical storytelling." Vincent Brown, Harvard University, Massachusetts Ada Ferrer treats in tandem two radically different developments that embodied the Caribbean's experience of the Age of Revolution. Widely researched and drawing on new sources, this is a fascinating reading of two turning points in the region's history." David Geggus, University of Florida "Drawing on archival records from Cuba, Spain, and France, Ada Ferrer has crafted a brilliant work that goes far beyond comparative history. With elegant prose and telling detail, she traces the ways in which Cubans and the Africans among them reflected on the reality of slavery and the

example of freedom when they looked - and sailed - across the Windward Passage to the revolutionary society of Saint-Domingue/Haiti. This splendid book allows us to listen to and watch the soldiers, planters, runaways, and sojourners who made that crossing, or heard from those who had, and then tried to shape their own situation in the light of transformative new knowledge."

Rebecca J. Scott, University of Michigan "Ferrer's contribution to Caribbean and age of revolution history is original, well researched, and accessible. Summing up: recommended." R.

Berleant-Schiller, Choice "This fine book follows untraveled paths, combining fascinating discoveries in new primary sources with refreshing interpretations of a difficult subject ... offers an ongoing comparison and discussion of the interactions between two sugar islands, St Domingue, France's richest colony during the eighteenth century, and Cuba, long neglected as an economic colony by Spain." Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *The Journal of American History*

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This thesis covers the tumultuous ties Cuba had with the Haitian Revolution in the late 18th and early 19th century. As news came in of reports of a black uprising in Saint Domingue, the white plantation class of Cuba were in fear of a similar event taking place on their own colony. This caused them to adjust accordingly by implementing guidelines to prevent the black population of Haiti inciting any uproar for the slave class of Cuba to take root. For the most part, this was a success. However, it didn't mean that some in Cuba didn't look at the Haitian Revolution as an inspiration. One example was the conspiracy led by a black carpenter named Jose Antonio Aponte. Aponte viewed the republic of Haiti as a model for what he envisioned for Cuba. The author provides more details and other reports of Haitian-inspired incidents, not only in Cuba but other colonies. While none of these dreams came to fruition, it's telling of how Haiti played a pivotal part in the history of the Americas and how blacks of the Americas yearned to escape subjugation. Ferrer did good research for this title. I would recommend this to anybody who's interested in Cuban history or the Haitian Revolution, itself.

Sorry, I haven't finished it yet. However, what I have read provided me with a whole range of new

information. The juxtaposition of the divergent histories of the two islands works really well, especially the emphasis on the Cuban planters' fear of similar uprisings in their own backyard and their conflicting delight at the unthought of opportunity of being able to match, and even surpass, the French Dominican success as sugar producing slavery dominated society. This book was exactly what I was looking for as an author of historic fiction. I love it. Many thanks, Ada Ferrer.

Explains how the Haitian revolution influenced the course of Cuban history. Didn't know much about the wider influences of the Haitian revolution in the Caribbean.

great book. boring tho lol

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