

Black British Migrants in Cuba

Black British Migrants in Cuba offers a comprehensive study of migration from the British Caribbean to Cuba in the pre-World War II era, spotlighting an important chapter of the larger trajectory of the Afro-Atlantic diaspora. Grounded in extensive and rigorous multisited research, this book examines the different migration experiences of Jamaicans and Leeward and Windward Islanders, along with the transnational processes of labor recruitment and the local control of workers on the plantation. The book also explains the history of racial fear and political and economic forces behind the marking of black migrants as the “Other” and the resulting discrimination, racism, and violence against them. Through analysis of the oppositional and resistance strategies employed by British Antilleans, the author conveys migrants’ determination to work, live, and survive in the Caribbean.

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Black British Migrants in Cuba

*Race, Labor, and Empire in the Twentieth-Century
Caribbean, 1898–1948*

JORGE L. GIOVANNETTI-TORRES

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To my mother
Ruth Torres Caquíás
Con todo el amor del mundo
And to my other mentors
Because they cared

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Acknowledgments

The making of this book took more time than I had planned. Many obstacles got in its way to completion. Some were self-inflicted, I admit. But others were external. Over the years, I dodged some, confronted others, and got to this “final lap.” Then, as if wanting to test my endurance, the ultimate external obstacle – some call it “mother nature” – reached the Caribbean as I gave the “final” touches to the manuscript. My deadline looming, Hurricane Irma threatened me with a power outage that fortunately did not happen. It certainly made me work faster, while clicking “save” every minute. One week later, as I sat to write these lines, Hurricane María hit Puerto Rico with a force unseen in almost a century. Consequently, here I am, without electricity and writing in the dark, yet thinking of the many people who brought light to this project and to me personally as I worked on it. How, then, could temporary darkness undermine so much light and energy? How could I not finish, submit the manuscript in time, and thank them? At the risk of faulty memory in the middle of a devastated island, here I go.

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