

Adèle G. van der Plas

Revolution and criminal
justice: the Cuban
experiment, 1959-1983

LATIN AMERICA STUDIES



39

REVOLUTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE: THE CUBAN EXPERIMENT, 1959-1983

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Translated from Dutch by Peter Mason

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

How to present for the English-speaking reader an equivalent of an institution which has no equivalent in the English-speaking world?

The *Tribunales Populares de Base* appear in the text as (popular) base tribunals. 'Tribunals', rather than 'courts', because most of the associations which the word 'court' has for an English speaker are hardly applicable to the experimental Cuban forms of basic judicial administration described in this book. Moreover, at the various levels of administration (neighbourhood, municipality, region, province, nation) no distinction is made in the word used: these are all 'tribunals'.

Last but not least, perhaps the choice of an English word which is as close as possible to the Cuban original might be one way for us of restoring to the Cuban people what is *theirs* in their own language rather than resorting to the terms of linguistic and cultural imperialism.

THE MAIN LAWS REFERRED TO IN THE TEXT

- L.O.P.J.** Ley Orgánica del Poder Judicial, 27.1.1909.
1909
- L.E.C.** Ley de Enjuiciamiento Criminal, Royal Decree 14.9.1882 (Spain), in
1888 force in Cuba by Royal Decree of 19.10.1888.
- C.D.S.** Código de Defensa Social, Decreto Ley No. 802, 4.4.1936, **Gaceta**
1936 **Oficial, edición extraordinaria, No. 108, 11.4.1936.**
- L.O.S.J.** Ley de Organización del Sistema Judicial, Ley No. 1250, **Gaceta**
1973 **Oficial, edición ordinaria, No. 13, 23.6.1973.**
- L.O.S.J.** Ley de Organización del Sistema Judicial, Ley No. 4, **Gaceta Oficial**
1977 edición ordinaria, No. 36, 25.8.1977.
- L.P.P.** Ley de Procedimiento Penal, Ley No. 1251, **Gaceta Oficial, edición**
1973 ordinaria, No. 14, 16.6.1973.
- L.P.P.** Ley de Procedimiento Penal, Ley No. 5, **Gaceta Oficial, edición**
1977 ordinaria, No. 32, 15.8.1977.
- C.P.** Ley del Código Penal, Ley No. 21, 15.2.1979, **Gaceta Oficial, 1.3.1979.**
1979



Map of Cuba

Cuba is the largest and most westernly island in the Caribbean. It is 180 km from the coast of the United States. The Cuban population is Spanish-speaking and is mainly composed of people having Spanish or African origins. At present Cuba has some 9 million inhabitants. The island is 105,007 sq. km in area. Isla de Pinos, an island off the south coast of Cuba, has an area of 2,200 sq. km.