
Resistance Discourse in Nancy Morejón's Two Poems; "Black Woman" and "Looking Within": An Analysis

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Summery

The paper is an attempt to comprehend and analysis selected poems of Morejón, Nancy in relation to poetic resistance techniques. The researcher selected two poems "Black woman and Looking Within" to reveal the new relationship between poetic techniques and resistance of identity oppression.

Morejón, Nancy in her two poems; "Looking Within" and "Black Woman", resists and rehabilitates the stereotype discourse of black women and slavery in the Caribbean history. According to Hardt, Michael and Weiss, Gail, the resistance discourse creates new world leads to new perspective and establishes examples that bring ethical and political transformations in the oppressive structures. "The study of resistance discourse helps in understanding the subjectivities capable of creating a new world or leading to a new vision of freedom", argues Hardt. While Weiss says, when an artist makes "linguistic and other innovations in fictional work, he/she establishes patterns that can bring ethical and political transformations within the oppressive structures. Such works demonstrate the manner in which the marginalized resist the dominant authorities in order to bring changes or transformations that point to freedom".

Morejón in the two poems, "Looking Within" and "Black Woman", subverts the stereotype of the African slaves in black women discourse creating counter discourse in which the poetess redefines female black women in general and slaves in particular. Moréjon tackles slavery and the stereotype of African black women without any expression of self pity that might evoke or reinforce the notion of slavery passivity. On the contrary, acted as effective social

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and political actor rather than victim of colonial history. Morejón's in these two poems redefines her new world experience through persona, emotive, and allusion techniques.

Key words: Resistance Poetry, Morejón, Resistance, Resistance Literature, Looking Within, Black Woman, poetic techniques. Persona

خطاب المقاومة في قصيدتي نانسي مورixon ؛ "المرأة السوداء" و "النظر إلى الداخل": تحليل

مروه سعد محمود (مدرس مساعد لغة إنجليزية)

ملخص

يناقش البحث شعر الشاعر الكوبيه نانسي مورixon كمحاولة لفهم وتحليل شعر مورixon. ويتناول البحث شعر نانسي مورixon فيما يتعلق بتقنيات المقاومة الشعرية. واختار الباحث قصيدتين بعنوان "المرأة السوداء والنظر إلى الداخل" لكشف العلاقة الجديدة بين التقنيات الشعرية ومقاومة قمع الهوية.

شعر المقاومة هو ابتكارات الشاعر إما لغويا أو أي ابتكارات أخرى التي تجلب تحولات أخلاقية وسياسية في البنية القمعية. تعاني مورixon في مجتمعها من القمع كأقلية أفريقية ولهذا فإن البحث محاولة للإجابة على هذه الأسئلة. ما هو شعر المقاومة؟ هل يخلق شعر المقاومة خطابًا مصادًا في تاريخ كوبا وهوية لأمة بأكملها؟ كيف أعادت نانسي مورixon تعريف تجربتها في يخص الهوية السوداء؟ وإلى أي مدى تعد التقنية الشعرية في قصائد مورixon مثال لشعر المقاومة فيما يتعلق بقمع الهوية؟

الكلمات الدالة: نانسي مورixon - شعر - مقاومة-شعر المقاومة- الهوية السوداء- التقنيات الشعرية- كأقلية أفريقية- قمع الهوية

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The paper is an attempt to comprehend and analysis selected poems of Morejón, Nancy in relation to poetic resistance techniques. The researcher selected two poems "Black woman and Looking Within" to reveal the new relationship between poetic techniques and resistance of identity oppression.

Resistance poetry is the poet innovations either linguistically or any other innovations which brings ethical and political transformations in the oppressive structure. Morejón suffers from oppression as African minority. The paper is an attempt to answer these questions. What is resistance poetry? Does her resistance poetry create counter discourse in the history of Cuba and an identity for a whole nation? how does she redefine her black identity experience? And how far does poetic technique places Morejón poems as an example of resistance poetry in relation to identity oppression.

Biography

Morejón, Nancy, born in 1944, is one of the most distinguished modern Cuban women poets, is a case in point. Moréjon is a celebrated Afro-Cuban poetess, feminist, revolutionary poetess, essayist, critic, editor, journalist, and translator. Morejón was the first African Cuban student to take a degree in the Faculty of Arts at Havana University, where majored in French. Morejón

was the first black poetess in Cuban history to be given the opportunity to publish widely and to acquire a professional status as a writer, critic, and translator. Moréjon is the winner of Cuba's National Literary Prize in 2001. The poetess is also the first Cuban women to celebrate blackness in poetry following the footsteps of Nicolás Guillén¹ (Lofton).

Morejón, Nancy wrote twelve collections of poems, three monographs, a play, and four volumes of critical studies on Cuban and Caribbean history and literature, as well as numerous poems and articles that were published in anthologies, literary journals and mass media. Some of her poems transcended literary genre and were dramatized in mime recitals by Morejón herself. The poetess creates poetry that is at the service of society, an objective poetry with precise images and details of the concrete world around her. Moréjon creates poetry of “social decolonizing consciousness while at the same time revealing a profound consciousness of her poetry. In every instance, Morejón unveils the essence of her human social cultural and ideological world always filtered through her aesthetic lens” (Cook 70).

Resistance Discourse

Nancy Morejón in her two poems; “Looking Within” and “Black Woman”, resists and rehabilitates the stereotype discourse of black women and slavery in the Caribbean history. According to Hardt, Michael and Weiss, Gail, the resistance discourse creates new world leads to new perspective and establishes examples that bring ethical and political transformations in the oppressive societies. (Hardt 65). While Weiss says, artist can create better world for the oppressed through his work of arts and other innovations in fiction. The work of art should originate patterns that can bring ethical and political transformation in the oppressed societies. Such works point to the paths the marginalized should

follow to resist the dominant authorities in order to bring changes or transformations that lead to freedom (Weiss 96-97).

In addition, Kristeva, Julia agrees with Weiss on the significance of language in resistance, as Weiss believes that the marginalized can resist oppression through language to form ethical and political transformation. As well as, Kristeva maintains that women "can get beyond patriarchal language and patriarchal thinking by seeking access to what she calls the *semiotic* dimension of language" (Kristeva 134). Kristeva argues that language has two dimensions symbolic and semiotic. In symbolic the words operate, and meanings are endorsed by them. In contrast is the semiotic dimension of language because it consists of elements as intonation (sound, tone of voice, volume), rhythm, and body language, that occurs as we speak that reveal our feelings. Thus, semiotic is the way we speak and the emotions that come across in our voice and body language as we talk (Kristeva 134).

Resistance discourse diversity defined by many critics and philosophers as, Cudjoe, Hoy, Bande and Grafe. Cudjoe, Selwyn R. and Brown, Lesley define resistance as any act intended to resist oppression either it is a slave master, multination cooperation, occupying or ruling power. Hoy, David Couzens, Professor of Philosophy, believes that resistance causes transformation in the existing order while the critic, Bande, Usha, argues that resistance can take away this power to create space for the marginalized groups. Grafe, Adrian and Stephens, Jessica have another perspective of resistance that can fight even savagery to improve the lives of the people to be their own.

Cudjoe, the renowned critical on Caribbean literature and Professor of African studies, defines resistance as any act or even complex of acts formed to dispose any oppressor either slave

masters or multinational companies (Cudjoe 19). Brown argues, resistance is any action against a dominating or ruling power (Brown 2562). When power turns into domination, it restricts the constructive possibilities in a socio-political order, which may lead to the emergence of resistance, Hoy argues. The emergence of such resistance may not disrupt power but, it allows space for individuals to enhance the possibilities to resist against unjust and oppressive order (Hoy 92-93). Bande, defines resistance as the plan that likely remove the dominant power (Bande 1). She states, resistance may involve duplication of the hegemonic prejudice that regulate the identities of the subaltern groups and silence the other groups. Resistance understands the need and listens to the voices of the marginalized to bring them into the center. Therefore, domination and resistance are interlinked and, power is central to both (Bande 2). Resistance, as Bande writes, engages with oppressive power structures, and questions the responsible of the injustices under those structures. Consequently, resistance reshapes the spaces available to the marginalized, and helps to transform the existing order (Bande 1-4). While Grafe and Stephens argue that, resistance is often associated with riots in societies have marginalization and oppression. The key role of resistant in these societies is to fight barbarism and improve the life of the oppressed people. There are different approaches for the individual to assert his/her integrity and to come alive by coming into his/her own (Grafe 1).

Resistance writers across cultures believe that their nonviolent struggle and literary historical reclamations are important area of cultural territory (Harlow 9). Barbara Harlow argues, resistance of poetry is the arena of struggle as it is capable to serve as a mean to express personal identity, part of cultural institutions and historical existence of people. The role of resistance poetry is not less important than the role of the political leader of resistance. Harlow perceives the poet like leaders of the resistance movements because he seizes the taken historicity back and re-appropriates it for his

nations. For instance, Guillén, Nicolás consistently presents his readers with the challenge to assert the capability of their own Cuban and Latin American culture and its historical past (Harlow 31-40).

Vail, Leroy and White, Landeg agree with Harlow in their article "Forms of resistance: songs and perceptions of power in colonial Mozambique" poetry and poetic expression in Africa are welcomed because it is the free identity expression in many African societies. It is welcomed as the main approach of communication between powerless and powerful (Vail, 197). Resistance poems, however, attempt furthermore to transform these relationships of power. As Stendhal's states "politics in a work of literature is like a pistol shot in the middle of a concert, something loud and vulgar and yet a thing to which it is not possible to refuse one's attention" (Harlow 16). The literature of resistance comprehends itself furthermore as immediately and directly involved in a struggle against dominant forms of ideological and cultural production. As Edward Said referred to as a "repressed or resistance history" (1987 Harlow 28).

Yasmine Getz in her article "Poetry of the Resistance, Resistance of the Poet" differentiates between two types of poetry: poetry of resistance and resistance poetry. She draws the attention that every type of this poetry has its own significant role. Poetry written during the resistance and poetry that is written as an act of resistance: what resists is poetry delivered by an exemplary subject, the poet (Getz 51). She states that poetry of resistance is the poetry written during the time of occupation and executions. For example, when Germany was occupying France, the poets used to write their poetry in French language which was against the propaganda that was written in German; the language of the occupying forces. This pattern of poetry bears the idea of reviving the nation after defeat and

occupation. It is a "National" poetry defending the literature and all the values of the occupied country (Getz 53). Therefore, some of these poems became a song of nationhood. Getz continues that poetry during resistance labels for a specific period in which poets resist by using their words to get back their country through poetry.

Getz states that poetry plays significant role in the struggle against oppression. Resistance of poetry for Getz is the poetry that resists subject or against history. It is a resistance in which the poet is typical because he challenges the oppressor and speaks in his own name (Getz 68). Example of the poet whose poem is "like rifles and let fly words of lead and steel include Nancy Morejón of Cuba, Julia de Burgos of Puerto Rico; Clementina Suarez of Honduras; Delia Quinonez and Maria de los Angeles Ruano of Guatemala; Mercedes Durand, Lil Milagros Ramirez and Claribel Alegria of El Salvador" (Arinto 62). Patricia Arinto believes that resistance of poetry is a witness of the suffering of their people under oppression and thereby participates in the revolutionary struggle. The poet has a political role and he must fight with words; however, people must also fight with him (Arinto 62).

Morejón's Poems

Morejón's work addresses contemporary issues of ethnicity, gender, history, politics, and Afro-Cuban identity. Her poems stand as lively reflections on the intermingling of Spanish and African cultures in Cuba, on what it means to be a child of both traditions (Northampton). Like her mentor, the legendary poet Guillén, Nicolás, Morejón celebrates blackness but refuses to inscribe identity or struggle within the parameters of any single factor. "I am, at once, Nancy Morejón, "she says, "an individual, a unity, who cannot be subdivided into parts as one does when learning math. I am not more of a black person than a woman; I am not more of a woman than a Cuban; I am not more of a black person than a Cuban. I am a brief combustion of those factors (Northampton). The

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poet Jayne Corte writes "This combustion" has resulted in poems of quick fire and steadily burning flame, which are, lyrical, compassionate, complex, and dazzling in their subtleties. (Northampton). Carlos Moore describes Morejón poem as

The voice through which the poetic projects her bittersweet triumph is not a harsh, accusatory one. Her rumination is not spoken to the perpetrator, but rather serves as a reflection for articulating her achievements despite serve obstacles. She portrays a new society, especially within Cuba-one different in many respects from its past portrayal (Hidalgo 345).

In her two poems, "Looking Within" and "Black Woman", Morejón subverts the stereotype of the African slaves in black women discourse creating counter discourse in which the poetess redefines female black women in general and slaves in particular. Morejón tackles slavery and the stereotype of African black women without any expression of self pity that might evoke or reinforce the notion of slavery passivity. On the contrary, acted as effective social and political actor rather than victim of colonial history (Williams 154-160). Morejón calls for separation of the past and for culture fusion. The poetess wants African slaves to disconnect from their past and consider Caribbean as their new homeland. As well as Morejón rebels against the dominant image of the African black women created by male.

Morejón's in these two poems redefines her new world experience through persona, emotive, and allusion techniques. In emotive technique the poet tends to instrument words that stir the emotion of the reader. The poetess implements allusion technique as she makes reference to well known figures or events from literature, history or mythology. The emotive technique Morejón's used in her

poems does not have any expressions of self pity or lament which evokes feelings of sorrow or submissiveness. The persona in her poem “Black Woman” reflects her strength and everlasting capacity of survival in which the poetess places the black woman within the context of the Cuban history—contrary to the Spanish Caribbean traditional poetry that often defines the slaves by stressing on their passivity and sexual character (Williams 10).

On the contrary Guillén poems’ helped to give the Cuban a hint of humanistic, social and political preoccupations. For example, in his poem “Son Number 6”

We’ve come together from far away,
young ones and old,
Blacks and Whites, moving together . . .
Come out Mulatto,
walk on free,
tell the white man he can’t leave . . .
Nobody breaks away from here (Baugh).

Moréjon considers Gullien as her predecessor and mentor. The above lines reflect Guillén’s perspective as he exemplifies the idea that Africa is a defining factor in the Caribbean culture. Guillén believes, the African culture is as basic as Cuban culture and the Cuban nation includes white and black as equals. Moréjon agrees with Guillén in “Black woman”, as she reconstructs the path of the black woman from Africa to the Caribbean and a process of transformation from her African identity into that of the Creole. Creole is a person of mixed European and black descent especially in the Caribbean (Williams 13).

Analysis

I still smell the foam of the sea they made me cross.
That night, I cannot not remember it.
The ocean itself could remember that.
But I can't forget the first gull I made out in the
distance.
High, the clouds, like innocent eyewitnesses.
Perhaps I haven't forgotten my lost coast, nor my
ancestral language.
They left me here and here I have lived.
And because I worked like an animal,
here I was reborn.
How many Mandinga epics did I look to for strength.
I rebelled (Cook 201).

Moréjon portrays the black woman in "Black Woman" as a strong political actor rebelling against the dominant stereotype male created image of the Afro Caribbean woman. Unlike the historical accounts that tend to omit the political role of the black woman in Cuban history. Kamala Kampadoo² states that the colonial stereotypes image of the Afro Caribbean woman has been identified as "passive, downtrodden, subservient, resigned workers" (Williams 13). Moréjon was neglected as a mother and was described as animal like who was lacking any quality of a defined human being.

The persona technique that is implemented throughout the whole poem is the first person narrative which reflects the poet's belief that the black woman exists in the history and has a vital role. Williams maintains that the above lines do not have any sign of passivity contrary, to the subsequent adjustment to the Cuban life. Using in the next lines the first person narrative confirms that it is not a passive sign. The third person pronoun "They left me here"

conveys the notion of the black woman involuntary uprooting from Africa (Williams 13).

I worked on and on.
I strengthen the foundations of my millenary song and of my hope.
Here I built my world.
I felt for the hills.

Black Woman
My real independence was the free slave fort
And I rode with the troops of Maceo.

Only a century later,
Together with my descendants,
From a blue mountain,
I came down from the Sierra
To put an end to capital and usurer,
to generals and to bourgeois.
Now I exist: only today do we own, do we create.
Nothing is foreign to us (Cook 201-3).

Moréjon said “My real independence was the free slave fort, and I rode with the troops of Maceo.” In this line the poetess implements the allusion technique which declares her participation with the Afro-Cuban leader Antonio Maceo⁴ in the independence of Cuba as many freed women did. Williams argues that Maceo protests the idea of the white man dominion by advocating the idea of Cuba as pluralist society. In fact, the poem moves the black Cuban women from the margin to the center of Cuban history. The poetess resists as a social and political actor rather than as a mere victim of colonial history (Williams 14). Resistance rather than submission is her response to the oppression

At the same time, Morejón affirms her Cuban identity necessitates with confirmation of her African past. Williams said that finally, the poetess obtained identity which is implicit but socially and politically is formed without any specific regard to

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race. This is not only a remedy for her earlier material deprivation but also a source of liberation of her creative energies. The last lines in the poem point to the Marxist idea and the revolution that marked both the sufferance and the successful outcome of the struggles of a black woman, the end of the class struggles, racial prejudice and discrimination (Williams 14-15). The poet condemns the continuous oppression of the black women by creating her own world in the "hills" of Africa and later, in Batista'.

Subtlety and indirection are the instruments of the emotive technique that Moréjon implemented to express resistance against her slave experience. The above lines express strongly her dissociation from the African past. Miller notes that Moréjon rejects the representation of slavery as being mutilated from the Cuban culture. Instead, offers different picture in which the poetess consciously disconnected from her past which had come to lose its relation to present circumstance. The poetess repels against the slavery and the contemporary movement for psychological recovery of Africa by new world. Indirectly the above lines reflect the conflicts between her participation in supporting the economy and her economic deprivation. "Was it to Guinea? Benin? To Madagascar? Or Cape Verde?" Moréjon refuses to commit suicide, since Guinea was a term for the spiritual homeland to which many enslave Africans diaspora believed they would return to at death. The poetess becomes increasingly distant from the memory of Africa to the extent is not able even to recall her country of origin. This loss of origins occurs alongside with the increased identification of her new land. Moréjon calls for black unity by declaring her separation from the past. The poetess believes in single African homeland in which all African minorities in the Caribbean belong or can return. The poetess undercuts the psychology and background of all the black African people. Therefore, this rebirth allows the cultural differences and the Cuban

identity to take root for black Africans. The poetess is claiming a central place in the social order, based on her contribution to both economic and political life. The poetess is singing which means the poetess is getting closer to her goal of freedom and restoration (Miller 107). Moréjon resists being enslaved black woman and confirms her humanity.

Morejón says “And I rode with the troops of Maceo”, is an illusion to the black woman Cuban nationalism and her significant participation in the Cuban history. Williams argues that the poetess explicitly confirms her participation with Antonio Maceo³ against Spanish rule to the revolution of 1959 led by Fidel Castro. It also reflects her support of the revolutionary Marxist regime as a free Cuban woman (Williams 13).

I came down from the Sierra
to put an end to capital and usurer,
to generals and to bourgeois.
Now I exist: only today do we own, do we create.
Nothing is foreign to us.
The land is ours.
Ours the seal and the sky,
the magic and the vision.
My equals, here I see you dance
Around the tree we are panting for communism (Cook
203).

These lines are very pointed as it points to the Marxist idea for creative labor achievable under socialism. Moréjon points that the revolution marks both the sufferance and the successful outcome of the struggles of the black woman. The end of the class struggles, racial prejudice and discrimination (Williams 13-15).

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Morejón concludes the poem with allusion device when mentioned the "Mandinga epics", as if the poetess would like to confirm that the whole poem is an epic vision. Peters articulates that the poetess struggles for liberty from the beginning to the end of the poem and Mandinga \ mandinka history serves to fortify this struggle. As one Wikipedia article states in "Mandinka people", that Mandinga or the Mandinka fights to gain their independence from previous empires in the thirteenth century. Then they established empire which stretched across West Africa. During the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth century as many as a third of the Mandinka population were enslaved and shipped to the [Americas](#) (Peters 30). Morejón inspired the "revolutionary idealism" from her ancestral and shared it in the Cuban revolution to fight for freedom "I rebelled" .

Morejón expresses her personal point of view about this poem in her interview with Abudu, she said:

I think it is my happiest poem....I get carried away by an impulse. And so, I suddenly had something like a vision of a slave woman in front of me, who was somewhat showing me her life in scenes which I was watching. And then I wrote the poem. This poem speaks in a first person voice that is not autobiographical. Presumably it is an "I" which is at the same time a "we", as the great American poet Walt Whitman suggested. So, when I talk about "me", it is "us", and it is the story of an epic vision. This is an epic poem. It is the history of a fundamental chapter of humanity: the uprooting of African slaves from the West African coast mainly to America, seen from a woman's perspective (Abudu 39).

The persona in "Black Woman" resists marginalization believes black woman exists in the history and plays a vital role.

Williams notes that, persona portrays black woman as a strong political actor resisting the dominant stereotype image of the Afro Caribbean woman. Unlike the historical accounts that tend to omit the political role of black woman in Cuban history (Williams 13). The persona moves black Cuban women from the margin to the center of Cuban history.

From the sixteenth century dates my sorrow
And I hardly knew it
because that nightingale
always sings in my sorrow (Cook 161).

Although the poem "Looking Within" is few lines, the persona technique reflects the slave woman resists slavery through presenting the progressing from slavery to freedom, from Morejón's perspective. Persona sheds light on action that tackle the African minorities emotion, as Morejón recreates the slave past and calls for integration with Cuban society. Cudjoe states that at the beginning of 1503, the slave trade was prohibited in Cuba because of the rebellions of the Indians and Africans (Cudjoe 8). The poetess traces the history of black slave from slavery to freedom. The slaves were exploited, abused sexually, physically and mentally in the new land.

... in 1501, the entrance of Moorish slaves [Santa Domingo-Haiti] was forbidden, while that of African slaves born in Catholic countries was permitted. And, undoubtedly because of the number existing in 1503, Ovando asked for the complete prohibition of the trade, for, in previous years, the Negroes had shown an open tendency towards rebellion and conspiracy with the Indians (Cudjoe 8).

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Therefore, resistance began from the time slaves were captured in the interior of Africa and continued after their arrival. Cudjoe states that, the Africans in Caribbean fought long and strenuously for their freedom. There were revolts in Puerto Rico in 1527, Honuras in 1548, and New Spain in 1612 (Cudjoe 8). Persona in "Looking Within" resists marginalization and represents the voice of slaves and slave women in specific. According to Cook and González the persona rewrites the history of blacks and advocates for coexistence. As the poet since the first day, "hardly knew it" (Cook 161). Cook claims that, Morejón is strong and by her own hands rewrites the slave history from slavery to freedom. Although the poet honors the suffering of slaves in the past, but finally they are not marginalized and should integrate with the Cuban society as a Cuban (Cook 161). The persona in "Looking Within" indicates Morejón as a poetess is formed in the revolution

The poet sings, celebrates and welcomes her identity. González advocates that, the poet believes after acceptance is cohabitation. Her new vision of the African minorities after slavery, colonization, survival, and subordination, is triumph. The persona technique in the poem invites all, especially Afro-Cuban, to embrace their heritage, their past, and the wisdom of the ancestors to create new black imaginaries full of hope, life, and dimension (González 965-6).

The researcher agrees with Cook and González, that the persona in "Looking Within" is emotive. The poet calls African minorities to participate in the revolution to rewrite the Cuban history, as they are not marginalized any more. Persona resists marginalization and calls for collective black culture identity which is part of the Cuban culture. The nightingale sings declaring the end of the slavery and welcomes the freedom.

Conclusion

To sum up, the reader can't separate the political historical content in the two poems "Black Woman" and "Looking Within". They are anthology of a slave ocean voyage, suffering, resisting, rebellion, and celebrating the Cuban revolution. Although the history of the slavery is full of sorrow and horror, it also manifests struggle and resistance. Moréjon resistance poetry rewrites the black Cuban history according to her perspective in which the poetess achieves independence and identity. Identity which is implicit socially and politically and formed without specific regard to race.

End Notes

1. Nicolas Nicolás Cristóbal Guillén Batista (10 July 1902 – 16 July 1989) was a [Cuban](#) poet, journalist, political activist, and writer. He is best remembered as the national poet of [Cuba](#).¹ Born in [Camagüey](#), he studied law at the [University of Havana](#), but abandoned a legal career and worked as a typographer and journalist. His poetry was published in various magazines from the early 1920s; his first collection, *Motivos de son* (1930) was strongly influenced by his meeting that year with the [African-American](#) poet, [Langston Hughes](#). He drew from *son* music in his poetry. *West Indies, Ltd.*, published in 1934, was Guillén's first collection with political implications.¹ From 1961 he served more than 25 years as president of the *Unión Nacional de Escritores de Cuba*, the National Cuban Writers' Union.^[1] His awards included the [Stalin Peace Prize](#) in 1954, the 1976 [International Botev Prize](#), and in 1983 he was the inaugural winner of Cuba's [National Prize for Literature](#).
2. Kamala Kempadoo is Professor in the Department of Social Science at York University and a former director of the Graduate Program in Social and Political Thought. Kempadoo

teaches Caribbean studies, transnational feminisms, sex work studies, Black Studies, and critical perspectives in gender and development. Publications include *Trafficking and Prostitution Reconsidered* (Paradigm 2005/2012); *Sexing the Caribbean: Gender, Race and Sexual Labour* (Routledge 2004); *Sun, Sex and Gold: Tourism and Sex Work in the Caribbean* (Rowman and Littlefield 1999); and *Global Sex Workers: Rights, Resistance and Redefinition* (Routledge 1998). Kempadoo lectures internationally and as lived and worked in Britain, the Netherlands, the USA, several countries in the Dutch- and English-speaking Caribbean, and, since 2002, in Canada.

3. Lt. General José Antonio de la Caridad Maceo y Grajales (June 14, 1845 – December 7, 1896). He was born in Santiago de Cuba, that hilly, verdant city, at one time the colonial capital, situated between an ample bay and the densely forested Sierra Maestra. According to a majority of sources, his birthday was June 14, 1845. Marcos Maceo. Fellow Cubans gave Maceo the [sobriquet](#) of the "Bronze Titan" (Spanish: *El Titan de Bronce*), which was a reference to his skin color, stature and status. Spaniards referred to Maceo as the "Greater Lion" (*El Leon mayor*). Maceo was one of the most noteworthy [guerrilla](#) leaders in 19th century [Latin America](#), comparable to [José Antonio Páez](#) of [Venezuela](#) in military acumen. Maceo began his fight for Cuban liberation by enlisting as a private in the army in 1868 when the Ten Years War began. Five years later, he was promoted to the rank of general because of his bravery and his demonstrated ability to outmaneuver the Spanish army. In 1878 when most of the Cubans generals believed that their armies could not defeat the Spaniards, Maceo refused to surrender without winning Cuban independence and the abolition of slavery. Ultimately, he was forced to leave Cuba. He returned to Cuba

when war with Spain began again. His most famous campaign in the War of Cuban liberation was his invasion of western Cuba when his troops, mostly Afro-Cubans on horseback, covered more than 1,000 miles in 92 days and fought the enemy in 27 separate encounters. Spanish general [Valeriano Weyler](#) pursued him vigorously if only to curtail Maceo's destruction of the Cuban sugar industry. On December 7, 1896 Maceo was captured and killed as he attempted to rejoin [Maximo Gómez'](#) forces. His death prompted yet another congressional resolution for belligerent rights for Cuba.

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