

NICOLAS GUILLEN IN THE 1980s: A Guide to Recent Scholarship

Richard Jackson
Carleton University

Born in 1902, Nicolás Guillén is almost as old as this century. A flourish of publishing activity occurred in 1972 and again in 1982 celebrating his longevity. Few writers who began as Modernists are still alive to tell about the movement, as does Guillén in his memoirs, *Páginas vueltas* (published in Havana in 1982 in honor of his eightieth birthday). After a long and distinguished career in poetry, journalism, and politics, Cuba's national poet is becoming increasingly visible in the English-speaking world, where his candidacy for the Nobel prize for literature is encouraged annually and books, articles, dissertations, bibliographies, and translations of his work continue to appear.

Guillén has remained a controversial figure ever since his *Motivos de son* met with a heated reception in 1930. Critical reactions to his corpus—from his first bold book of black poetry to his recent experiments with style—have ranged far and wide.¹ Some critics have focused on Guillén as an exponent of Afro-Cuban poetry while others have viewed him as a poet having little to do with Africa. Some perceive a black aesthetic in his poetry; others say he is the most Spanish of Cuban poets. Some see him as a poet who stopped writing black poetry; others declare that he never wrote black poetry at all. Guillén himself has repeatedly stated that he is not a poet of *négritude*, yet some critics find literary value only in his black-dialect verse.

Some Guillén critics have gone so far as to ignore his post-Castro poetry or even to dismiss the poetry written after he converted to Communism in 1937 as that of a political propagandist who writes only poetry praising the Cuban Revolution. Much of this controversy reflects the various stages of development that Guillén has experienced, a complex evolution that explains why some recent criticism looks back in attempting to redefine and broaden classification of his works. My review of Guillén criticism in the 1980s will discuss recent scholarship on Guillén the *vanguardista*, on the issues of race, *négritude*, and ideology,

and on Guillén's journalism. In a few instances, I will relate this new criticism to earlier scholarship to suggest current directions in Guillén criticism.

The Stages of Guillén's Poetry

Classifying Guillén's works has been an obsession that has apparently continued into the 1980s. Although some earlier criticism dismissed everything Guillén wrote after Castro as unworthy of comment (and sinned equally by overextolling his early "folkloric" poetry as typical), recent attempts at classification have not reflected this narrow approach. While acknowledging the arbitrary nature of any classification, Stephanie Davis-Lett has divided Guillén's output into three broad periods: 1927–1934, the period that includes his "black" poetry phase; 1937–1964, when his dominant focus was social, political, and revolutionary; and 1968 to the present, a stage characterized by a variety of themes and experimental poetic techniques. Her categories highlight dominant trends over broad periods.²

Davis-Lett's overall organization of Guillén's work largely coincides with Angel Augier's overview of the poet's evolution as consisting of four periods: 1917–1923, adolescent verse typified by his Modernist-inspired poetry; 1927–1930, Guillén's Vanguardist period, increasingly seen as a transitional stage from Modernist imitations to his serious and original work; 1930–1933, Guillén's undisputed "black" period, when his poetry of note really began; and 1934 to the present, a period Augier views as continuous right into the 1980s.³ Augier's article appeared in the *Revista de literatura cubana*, one of three Cuban journals that devoted special issues to Guillén in 1982 to honor his eightieth birthday (the others being *Casa de las Américas* and *Universidad de la Habana*). Another article, a particularly useful one by Josefina García-Carranza, contains a chronological listing through 1980 of all Guillén's publications, complete with individual titles of poems and articles as well as a title index and an outline of important biographical dates.⁴

Renewing Old Habits: Nicolás Guillén, Vanguardist

Most critics today tend to focus on the black experience in *Motivos de son*. Stephanie Davis-Lett and Guillermo Rodríguez Rivera, however, look back on these poems from a slightly different angle. Both view this slender volume as an essential contribution to Latin American *vanguardismo*. Davis-Lett asserts that Guillén has yet to be recognized as one of the greatest humorists in Latin American literature.⁵ She believes that his humor derives in part from poetic or literary games, which can be reduced to the broad category of mockery of traditional

poetry. This practice dates back to one of Guillén's earliest groups of poems, the "Poemas de transición." Davis-Lett contends that these verses, written between 1927 and 1931, rebelled against the weaker, lifeless imitations of Modernist poetry, which Guillén himself was guilty of perpetrating. Her main point is that Guillén's mockery of traditional imagery and poetic form has not been a passing phase but a stylistic constant, an old habit often practiced—even in his most famous collection, *Motivos de son*. She finds the ultimate expression of Guillén's mocking of traditional poetic form in *El diario que a diario* (1974), a collection of poems imitating articles or advertisements in a newspaper that recounts the history of Cuba.

Guillermo Rodríguez Rivera reinforces Davis-Lett's argument by emphasizing the Vanguardist nature of Guillén's *Motivos de son*.⁶ This critic believes that the vanguard movements reawoke Guillén's interest in writing poetry after a five-year lapse (1923–1927) when he did not write a single verse. Rivera considers the years from 1927 to 1930 as Guillén's strongest Vanguardist period, which culminated in 1930 with *Motivos de son*. Like Davis-Lett, Rivera believes that Guillén repeatedly returned to Vanguardist expression, even forty years later in *El gran zoo* (1967) and *El diario que a diario* (1974). Rivera does not deny European influences on Latin American vanguard movements, but he insists that they contain more homegrown elements than foreign influences. For example, black poetry, especially the startlingly new black verse of *Motivos de son*, is a strong rhythmic testimony to Guillén's interest in racial and social themes and to the avant garde spirit that he has maintained.

Both Davis-Lett and Rivera pose an implied question: is Guillén's recent experimental period really the beginning of something new or simply a return to old habits first developed in his vanguard stage? Nicolás Bottiglieri believes that Guillén's recent work returns to themes first introduced during his youth.⁷ The critic nevertheless contends that in *El gran zoo*, Guillén's poetry entered a new stage of innovative verse and expressive possibilities that coincides well with the new society in which he now lives. Jorge Marbán focuses on the new direction taken by Guillén's poetry in *El gran zoo* and *El diario que a diario*, concluding that these two volumes of experimental poetry represent a daring artistic departure from the rigid limitations of socialist realism.⁸

On Race, Négritude, and Ideology

Most new criticism on Nicolás Guillén addresses the issues of race, négritude, and ideology in his early and recent work. J. Kubayanda has contributed a sizable body of new critical studies on these subjects in the 1980s.⁹ Sharply contradicting Ezequiel Martínez Estrada's claim that no strong African contributions exist in the new world,

Kubayanda argues that Cuba's African oral heritage has greatly influenced its literature, and he reinforces his view by bringing a strong African perspective to bear on Guillén's poetry. Kubayanda is convinced that the Cuban *son's* repetitive structure and use of drums are directly related to the music of the Congo. Kubayanda repeatedly demonstrates how the polyrhythms of drum language interconnect with written poetic language to produce what he calls "drum poetry," which he thinks can communicate in a way that transcends traditional poetic language. He also argues that much of Guillén's "meaningless" *jitanjá-fora* work is actually based on African-derived ideophones with a distinctive poetic and grammatical logic of their own.

Kubayanda utilizes his native knowledge of West African languages to strengthen his claim that the poetics of Africanness, which he calls *negrismo* in Spanish and *négritude* in French, are generally alive and well in Latin America today. But when bringing his African perspective to bear on Guillén's "active Africanist period," Kubayanda (like others) perceives a conflict between ethnicity and ideology in Guillén's poetry after the Cuban Revolution, when the poet allegedly turned his black characters into apologists and participants in the efforts at social transformation. For example, according to Kubayanda, the guitarist Juan, a scathing social critic of the 1930s (in *West Indies Ltd.*), metamorphoses in the 1960s collection *Tengo* into a bubbling, happy Marxist-Leninist and a contented materialist. Kubayanda accuses Guillén of breaking with black radicalism and his ethnic past and concludes that Africa has virtually disappeared from the poet's consciousness since the 1960s.

Guillén's position on race, especially since 1959, continues to intrigue critics. Kubayanda's view comes closest to that earlier expressed by Lloyd King, who was amazed at Guillén's reluctance to adopt a *négritude* position, "particularly as even sympathetic white Cuban critics were not persuaded by his claim that Cuba was Mulatto."¹⁰ King seemed discomfited by the Marxist attitude that Guillén eventually adopted—that color is irrelevant in a socialist state. Renée Larrier, in contrast, is more positive about Guillén's recent treatment of race.¹¹ In discussing racism as a recurring theme in recent Caribbean poetry, she illustrates how Guillén denounces U.S.-style violence in such poems as "Lynch" and "KKK" (in *El gran zoo*) and notes his militant spirit in "Está bien" (in *Tengo*), where the poet observes that marches, demonstrations, court suits, "clenched fists," and sermons are "all right" as a means to the end of integration. Larrier discusses Guillén's poems about black heroes in the United States, his elegiac poems on Martin Luther King, Jr., and his idolizing of Angela Davis, for whom he wrote what initially resembles a love song.

Constance de García-Barrios has been equally positive in her assessment of Guillén's racial stance. She commented in 1975 that Blacks

have been written about by many Cuban authors but none have devoted more extended attention to the subject than Nicolás Guillén, whose lifetime dedication to restoring black dignity created many new black figures in Spanish American literature.¹² For example, *Motivos de son* presented the unique figure of a black woman as a desirable human being. Guillén cast himself a main character in *West Indies Ltd.* and later chose Angela Davis and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as his ideals. García-Barrios insists that Blacks did not disappear from Guillén's poetry after 1959, even though his later presentation of them coincides with the philosophy of the Cuban revolutionary government. In a subsequent article, she also positively assessed Guillén's recent treatment of race.¹³ Although concentrating on the new generation of writers who address the black theme, García-Barrios shows how Guillén points out the negative effects of racism in his recent work, *La rueda dentada* and *El diario que a diario*, thus heightening all Cubans' awareness of the absurdity and destructiveness of racial prejudice. She argues that although the poems and short pieces of *El diario que a diario* refer to the nineteenth century, the cry against racism is plainly a message for today.

In 1983 Joseph Pereira expanded this positive approach to Guillén's position on race.¹⁴ Summarizing the poet's assertion that the Cuban Revolution brought about full recognition of Blacks as an integral part of authentic Cuban identity, Pereira argues that Guillén's work since 1959 reflects his belief in racial unity and the elimination of a "color line" in Cuba. Pereira also reviews some of Guillén's recent poetry that reminds the reader of the era when times were bad for Blacks in Cuba, as they still are for Blacks in the United States. The latter figure prominently in Guillén's recent work, a fact not lost on critics in the 1980s, who search in vain for Cuban Blacks in great numbers in his poetry. The Cuban Black in historical perspective is there, but Blacks living today, like Africa, have all but disappeared from Guillén's work. Yet whatever racial nuances his recent poetry manifests, the black sensibility that Guillén infused in his earlier work continues to attract the attention of critics, especially in North America.

Miriam DeCosta Willis was the first critic to highlight Guillén's "poetry for Black Americans."¹⁵ In 1973 she traced the treatment of Afro-Americans in his poetry from instances in the 1930s to Angela Davis and concluded that Guillén perceives the Black American more than any other as symbolizing the double stigma of race and caste. More recently, Yvonne Guillon Barrett has noted spiritual ties between Guillén and black aesthetic movements in the United States.¹⁶ For example, she considers his "Negro bembón" (in *Motivos de son*) a statement that "Black is beautiful," a forerunner to "Black Power" and to the "Black Arts Movement" in the United States today. Her positive view of "Negro bembón" parallels that of Jesús Sabourin-Fornaris, who (along

with Mirta Aguirre, Dellita Martin, Ian Smart, Antoni Turull, and Keith Ellis) has reanimated criticism dealing with *Motivos de son* in the 1980s.

Sabourin-Fornaris comments that Guillén's racist joke in "Negro bembón," the first poem of *Motivos de son*, suggested at first glance that the poet had gone over to the "other side" of the offenders, as opposed to the offended.¹⁷ But the critic points out that the poet's doubly offensive reference to the color black (*negro*) and big lips (*bembón*) is quickly modified by Guillén's insistence that the Black's mouth is beautiful (*santa*) and that he should think of himself as desirable. This message is continued in "Mulata," the second poem in the book. This point brings to mind Ian Smart's recent assessment of the meaning of Guillén's poem "Mujer nueva" (in *Sóngoro cosongo*).¹⁸ Smart argues that the black woman in this poem is aptly called *nueva* because the female personae in Guillén's earlier poetry were patterned after non-African-oriented models from Modernist, Post-Modernist, and Vanguardist poetry. Smart believes that the positive image portrayed by this new black model survived intact the political and nonpolitical vicissitudes affecting Guillén's art.

Angel Augier, the dean of Guillén critics and the poet's longtime friend, returned in 1982 to analyzing the *son*-poem, the poetic form that made Guillén famous in the 1930s.¹⁹ Augier argues that all music of popular origin evolves from the simple to the complex and that the *son* is no exception. This trend is especially true of the poetry of Nicolás Guillén, who foresaw the contribution that the musical *son* and its rhythmic structure (*el ritmo afro*) could make to lyric poetry. Mirta Aguirre (another close associate to whose memory Guillén dedicated his memoirs) examined this structure in some detail.²⁰ In her 1980 edition of *Motivos de son*, Aguirre lauded the *son* poems as the most important literary creation in Cuban letters. In her view, their impact will last because they address real problems while evoking the popular musical *son*. She describes their literary structure as generally having (with variations) four sections: an expository part presenting the "idea," a second part that develops this theme further, a third part containing a refrain or *estribillo*, and a closing statement.

Ian Smart and Dellita Martin examine the African roots of the *son* poems. Martin insists that all contemporary black poetry is partly inspired by the African oral tradition.²¹ Smart finds that the two-part structure of the *son* songs, the *largo* (or presentation of the main idea or situation) and the *montuno* (a repeated chorus line in which the situation is developed or the conflict resolved), was incorporated by Guillén into his *son* poems.²² Antoni Turull argues similarly that Guillén's *son* poems follow the same format as the musical *son*: both are divided into two parts, the *largo* (he also calls it the *motivo*) that introduces the theme and the *montuno* (the *estribillo* in his terminology) that develops

it.²³ In this way, Turull observes, Guillén's verbal art breaks with the traditional verse forms that he also mastered. Turull insists that although the *son* form is not fixed, it has definite general characteristics—humor, refrains, *agudo* verse, dialogue, and *jitanjáforas* (combinations of sounds in syllables that appear to be meaningless).

In a radical departure from conventional interpretations, Keith Ellis considers Guillén's *Motivos de son* to be a collection of love poems, representing a fascinating shift in emphasis from race relations to man-woman relations. This view is only one of the original conclusions in Ellis's recent book, *Cuba's Nicolás Guillén: Poetry and Ideology*.²⁴ Some critics strive to define what Guillén is while others attempt to show what he is not. Ellis's new book is unique because his assessment of Guillén's *son* poems and other conclusions disassociate Guillén from other leading writers and literary movements, often denying his links to them in order to show the distinctive characteristics of his poetry. Luis Inigo Madrigal took a similar approach in 1976 when he concluded that Guillén is not a black poet in language, style, or theme, and that for the most part, he is not even a social poet.²⁵ Ellis similarly concludes that Guillén is not a poet of *négritude*, magical realism, or folklore, neither is he hermetic. Especially refreshing are Ellis's sociologically symbolic interpretations of Guillén's "folklore" poems, "Sensemayá" and "Balada de güije."

Ellis's study admirably combines literary history and close textual analysis and is nearly exhaustive on both counts. Concerned with "the large theatre" in which Guillén as a Spanish American poet has been operating, Ellis provides for the first time in any language a comprehensive introduction to the ideological milieu of Guillén's poetry. Ellis is also the first to analyze almost all of Guillén's major poems and collections. Ellis believes that most studies of Guillén's poetry have been overwhelmingly sociological in tending to relate his poetry to aspects of Cuban social and political life and their international ramifications, a tendency that Ellis thinks culminated in Angel Augier's two-volume work, *Nicolás Guillén: notas para un estudio biográfico-crítico*.²⁶

Ellis's praise of Augier's major study is both deserved and fitting because despite the originality of Ellis's work, one cannot avoid seeing a bit of Augier in it. Although Ellis's study differs from Augier's and others that are "overwhelmingly sociological," Ellis perceives the importance of the relations between Guillén's poetry and politics, society, and ideology. Ellis acknowledges that Guillén's poetry falls within a category for which a theory of sociological criticism has been developed, but the critic also recognizes that understanding the ideological content of Guillén's poetry is a necessary part of close reading. Ellis's study is singular in providing analyses and close readings of a number of Guillén's poems, but he (like Augier and others) could not avoid applying sociological criticism to Guillén's poetry.

Ellis may be the first to devote so much space to the theoretical and historical background. In the first section, he discusses Marxist and other relevant sociological literary criticism, which he then applies to Guillén's work. But Ellis differs significantly from previous critics in also studying the artistic element in Guillén's poetry in its original printed context, thus providing new readings of many of these poems. As a result, Ellis reveals a great deal more about Guillén's craft. Like Augier, Ellis takes a chronological approach, and his analyses comprise the second part of his study. The third and final section is particularly noteworthy. The first part of it covers background and the second, methodology, complete with the necessary terminology of intrinsic analysis (defined in the glossary). The third part offers a refreshing change of pace in synthesizing Ellis's original conclusions, those mentioned and others such as his insistence on "metonymy" or "the metonymical process" (as opposed to "metaphor") in order to characterize aspects of Guillén's craft and social poetry in general.

Ellis's book contributes substantially to the controversy on race, *négritude*, and ideology in Guillén's life and poetry. Lorna Williams addresses the same issues, but from the opposite side, in *Self and Society in the Poetry of Nicolás Guillén*.²⁷ While Ellis is concerned with the theoretical and ideological framework (European and Latin American Marxism) of Guillén's poetry and how the poet employs it aesthetically, Williams's book focuses on Guillén's African background ("self" and race) and how he reconciles his ethnicity with Castro's revolutionary Cuba ("society" and class). In an exaggerated sense, Ellis's book has little to do with Guillén's Afro-Cuban self, lacking any section on the African background. Ellis accepts the idea that Guillén has not been a poet of *négritude* for some time. The focus of Williams's book consequently complements Ellis's study nicely. Williams questions Guillén's objectivity in portraying the Revolution because of his high position inside the country. Ellis instead views the Revolution and Guillén's art as unfolding as they should—in harmony. In short, Williams is concerned with how Guillén comes to terms with his black (mulatto) self in a socialist society and with how the poet's position in society has affected his poetry. Ellis assumes that Guillén has already come to terms and is concerned rather with how the poet reconciles his socialist self with literature and literature with ideology, with how Guillén makes poetry out of propaganda. The divergence of the two books is reflected in Williams's long introductory chapter on the African background in contrast with Ellis's introduction on European theorists. Ellis's analyses are thoroughly comprehensive, while Williams's are largely selective, with poems chosen to support her themes and theses.

Books published in the 1980s on Guillén include two recent publications in Spanish: Nancy Morejón's *Nación y mestizaje en Nicolás Guillén* and Mónica Mansour's *Análisis textual e intertextual: Elegía a Je-*

sús Menéndez de Nicolás Guillén.²⁸ Morejón's book emphasizes, as its title suggests, the importance of racial mixture and nation ("two sides of the same coin") in the life and literature of Cuba's national poet. Placing *Motivos de son* at the forefront of the vanguard movements of its day, she also examines questions of race, négritude, and ideology that have been raised by the poet and his critics.

Morejón indicates that her book was inspired by Guillén's article of the same name. Faithfully following the poet's concept of *mulatez*, she analyzes the presence of Hispanic and African culture, the two basic components of Guillén's prose and poetry, while tracing the history of *transculturación* (a term coined by Fernando Ortiz, who first adapted it to Cuban identity). Morejón further distinguishes between *aculturación*, meaning the adoption of another culture, and *transculturación*, a constant interaction and exchange between two (or more) cultures that creates a third. Morejón points out the difference between the perspectives of Fernando Ortiz, who recognizes an Indian impact in Cuban culture and history, and Nicolás Guillén, who does not, concluding that for Guillén, *transculturación* and *mestizaje* (mulatez) are almost synonymous. Unlike Ellis and Williams, Morejón emphasizes the importance of these terms and the racial and cultural synthesis they imply within the larger concepts of nationality and authentic Cuban identity.

Mansour's *Análisis textual e intertextual* gives Guillén's *Elegía a Jesús Menéndez* the critical attention it richly deserves (Guillén considers this, his longest poem, as one of the finest ever written in Spanish). The study contains Mansour's analysis as well as the text of the poem, photographs, and an index to key lexical motifs in the poem (including sugarcane, life, death, blood, night, dawn, and the figure of Jesús Menéndez). Mansour views the elegy as seven distinct, but interrelated, poems, each having its own form and theme and each representing different aspects of Jesús Menéndez's life and assassination. She traces the progressive—yet circular—movement of the work, begins with Jesús Menéndez in the canefields at the moment of death and ends with him "returned" to these fields as an immortal labor leader among his people again. Mansour analyzes the variety of forms and the semantic and textual links that traverse the work. She also discusses Guillén's use of free verse, regular metrification, prose, the *son*, and the thematic parallels that she believes Guillén established between Jesús Menéndez, the labor leader, and the evangelical image of Jesus Christ.²⁹

Guillén's Journalism

Criticism on Guillén has been revitalized by these new studies on race, négritude, and ideology, on mockery as a literary constant in Gui-

llén's poetry from the Vanguard period to today, and on the poet's return in his recent experimental poetry to the playful spirit of his early Vanguard days. Another new direction has been the efforts to document the connection between Guillén's more recent prose and his poetry. In 1976 George Irish analyzed Guillén the journalist, pointing to his revolutionary consciousness and personal commitment to struggle as the sources of the militant spirit of Guillén's prose, speeches, and poetry.³⁰ Irish's earlier work also emphasized that some of Guillén's prose inspired his subsequent poetic models of racial synthesis, namely, the spiritual model, the mulatto model, and the revolutionary model.

Roberto Márquez takes this new critical direction further in studying ideology and politics in Guillén's prose.³¹ Because Guillén's prose and poetry complement and illuminate each other, Márquez (like Irish) asserts that understanding Guillén's prose would help readers comprehend the power of his poetry as well as the breadth of his vision and ideology. Márquez reiterates that the relationship is so close that Guillén's prose writings can often be viewed as first drafts of subsequent poems. Like Hans Otto Dill ten years earlier,³² Márquez compares Guillén's article "Cualquier tiempo pasado . . . fue peor" (dated 9 July 1960) and his poem of the same title published in *Tengo* (1964). Both critics find many parallels and equivalents, but Márquez takes a broader approach in showing that racism, culture, and revolution are the three subjects that Guillén has addressed throughout his literary career. Márquez believes that the literary value of Guillén's prose would have assured his place as a distinguished writer even if he had not written a single line of poetry. Márquez plans to publish a volume of Guillén's prose in English translation.

Future Directions

Interest in Guillén's prose undoubtedly will increase, especially now that he has published his memoirs.³³ Guillén had already published a great deal about himself in prose and verse; consequently, future research will have to assess these memoirs in the context of other previously published sources covering the same ground. It would be rewarding to establish connections between various portions of the autobiographical material while documenting the problem of selectivity that the poet must have encountered in preparing his memoirs.

Another possible direction for Guillén criticism is suggested by a recent study by José Piedra on black mythology and the preservation of African traditions in Afro-American and Latin American literature.³⁴ Piedra focuses on monkey myths and a "code of blackness" that surfaces in Guillén's use of the monkey motif in his Afro-Cuban poetry,

much like the “signifying monkey” in black mythology and literature in the United States. What interests Piedra most in both literatures are African systems of signification and a language of signs. His study reflects expanded interest in comparative relationships among black writers and black literature in the Americas, thus continuing a trend established by Martha Cobb and others.³⁵ In another recent comparative study, Jonathan Ngaté analyzes the issue of naming in the African diaspora, using Guillén’s poem “El apellido” to illustrate how a black writer establishes ancestry by questioning conferred public identity.³⁶

One result of future comparative criticism will probably be the recognition of Guillén’s impact on North American writers of African descent. Ongoing discussion is needed of Guillén’s role as both forerunner to and model for the Black Arts Movement in the United States in the 1960s. For example, Guillén and the whole Cuban experience played an important part in the ideological development of Amiri Baraka. Also, 1986 was the fiftieth anniversary of the Spanish Civil War, and new works on Guillén’s role in it have already begun to appear.³⁷ Interest is widening to include other black writers in Latin America, but the scholarship available thus far suggests that Nicolás Guillén will continue to receive at least his fair share of critical attention. Some of it undoubtedly will challenge popularly held beliefs about Guillén and his works.³⁸

NOTES

1. For examples of these critical positions and commentary on many of them through 1979, see the section on Nicolás Guillén in Richard Jackson, *The Afro-Spanish American Author: An Annotated Bibliography of Criticism* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1980), 57–84.
2. Stephanie Davis-Lett, “Revisando a Nicolás Guillén,” *Explicación de Textos Literarios* 10, no. 1 (1981):87–94. See also her dissertation, “Development of Poetic Techniques in the Works of Nicolás Guillén,” Princeton University, 1976.
3. Angel Augier, “Evolución estético-ideológica de Nicolás Guillén,” *Revista de Literatura Cubana* 1 (July 1982):71–87.
4. See Josefina García-Carranza, “Síntesis bio-bibliográfica de Nicolás Guillén,” *Universidad de la Habana* 6, no. 216 (Jan.–Apr. 1982):54–121.
5. Stephanie Davis-Lett, “Literary Games in the Works of Nicolás Guillén,” *Perspectives on Contemporary Literature* 6 (1980):135–42.
6. Guillermo Rodríguez Rivera, “Nicolás Guillén y el vanguardismo,” *Revista de Literatura Cubana* 1 (July 1982):59–70.
7. Nicolá Bottiglieri, “Consideraciones y apuntes sobre *El gran zoo* de Nicolás Guillén,” *Casa de las Américas*, no. 132 (May–June 1982):108–16.
8. Jorge Marbán, “Innovaciones formales en la última poesía política de Nicolás Guillén,” *Crítica Hispánica* 6, no. 2 (1984):145–54.
9. See, for example, J. Kubayanda’s dissertation, “Nicolás Guillén and Aimé Césaire: A Universalist Approach to the Poetics of Africanness in Latin America and the Caribbean, 1929–1961,” Washington University, 1981; and his paper, “Africa and Cuba in the Works of Nicolás Guillén: Problems of Ethnicity and Nationalism,” presented to the African Studies Association, Indiana University, Bloomington, 21–24 October

1981. See also his articles, "Polyrhythmics and African Print Poetics: Nicolás Guillén, Aimé Césaire, and Atukwei Okai," *Interdisciplinary Dimensions of African Literature*, selected papers from the 1982 conference of the African Literature Association (Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1985); and "The Drum Poetics of Nicolás Guillén and Aimé Césaire," *Prismal/Cabral*, nos. 7–8 (1982):37–55.
10. Lloyd King, "Nicolás Guillén and Afro-Cubanism," *A Celebration of Black and African Writing*, edited by Bruce King and K. Ogung-Besan (Zaria and Ibadan, Nigeria: Ahmadu Bello University Press and Oxford University Press, 1975), 30–45.
 11. Renée Larrier, "Racism in the United States: An Issue in Caribbean Poetry," *Journal of Caribbean Studies* 2, no. 1 (Spring 1981):51–71.
 12. Constance de García-Barrios, "The Black in Cuban Literature and the Poetry of Nicolás Guillén," Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1975.
 13. Constance de García-Barrios, "The Black in Post-Revolutionary Cuban Literature," *Inter-American Review* 8 (1978):263–70.
 14. Joseph Pereira, "Raza en la obra de Nicolás Guillén después de 1959," *Sin Nombre* 13, no. 3 (1983):30–48.
 15. Miriam DeCosta Willis, "Nicolás Guillén and His Poetry for Black Americans," *Black World* 22 (Sept. 1973):12–16.
 16. Yvonne Guillon Barrett, "Nicolás Guillén y el movimiento de arte negro," *Iris* 3 (1982):47–55.
 17. Jesús Sabourin-Fornaris, "Del 'Negro bembón' a 'El apellido' (lectura de un poema de Nicolás Guillén)," *Casa de las Américas*, no. 132 (May–June 1982):91–98.
 18. Ian Smart, "Mulatez and the Image of the Black *mujer nueva* in Guillén's Poetry," *Kentucky Romance Quarterly* 4 (1982):379–90. This study and that cited in note 22 relate to Smart's dissertation, "The Creative Dialogue in the Poetry of Nicolás Guillén: Europe and Africa," University of California, Los Angeles, 1975.
 19. Angel Augier, "Hallazgos y apoteosis del poema son de Nicolás Guillén," *Casa de las Américas* 132 (May–June 1982):6–53.
 20. Mirta Aguirre, "El cincuentenario de *Motivos de son*," in Nicolás Guillén's *Motivos de son*, edited by E. Dávila (Havana: Editorial Letras Cubanas, 1980), 5–22.
 21. Dellita Martin, *Black Music as Poetic Referent in the Poetry of Nicolás Guillén and Langston Hughes*, forthcoming. This study also began as a dissertation: "Selected Poems of Nicolás Guillén and Langston Hughes: Their Use of Afro-Western Folk Music Genres," Ohio State University, 1975.
 22. Ian Smart, "Nicolás Guillén's son Poem: An African Contribution to Contemporary Caribbean Poetics," *College Language Association Journal* 23, no. 4 (June 1980):352–63.
 23. Antoni Turull, "Como ser poeta popular: el ejemplo de Nicolás Guillén," *Casa de las Américas* no. 132 (May–June 1982):87–90.
 24. See Keith Ellis, *Cuba's Nicolás Guillén: Poetry and Ideology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983).
 25. See the introduction to *Nicolás Guillén, summa poética*, edited by Luis Iñigo Madrigal (Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra, 1976), 15–45.
 26. See Angel Augier, *Nicolás Guillén: notas para un estudio biográfico-crítico* (Havana: Universidad Central de las Villas, Vol. 1, 1962; Vol. 2, 1964).
 27. See Lorna V. Williams, *Self and Society in the Poetry of Nicolás Guillén* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press).
 28. See Nancy Morejón, *Nación y mestizaje en Nicolás Guillén* (Havana: Ediciones Unión, 1982); and Mónica Mansour, *Análisis textual e intertextual: Elegía a Jesús Menéndez de Nicolás Guillén* (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1980).
 29. The *Elegía a Jesús Menéndez* continues to generate critical attention. Mirta Aguirre republished her study "En torno a la *Elegía a Jesús Menéndez*" in her book *Ayer de hoy* (Havana: Ediciones Unión, 1980); it first appeared in *La Última Hora* (Havana) 2 (10 July 1952):34–48. Angel Augier prepared a new article, "Notas sobre las *Elegías* de Nicolás Guillén," for the special issue entitled "Homenaje a Nicolás Guillén" of *Universidad de la Habana*, no. 216 (Jan.–Apr. 1982). In his new study, Augier recognizes Mansour's contribution in analyzing the *Elegía a Jesús Menéndez*. He disagrees, however, with her assertion that Guillén deliberately used the Bible as a basis for his

- poem about Jesús Menéndez. See also Augier's new anthology, *Nicolás Guillén: las grandes elegías y otros poemas* (Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1984), particularly his prologue, "Las grandes elegías de Nicolás Guillén," ix–xvii.
30. J. George Irish, "The Revolutionary Focus of Nicolás Guillén's Journalism," *Caribbean Quarterly* 22, no. 4 (Dec. 1976):68–77.
 31. Roberto Márquez, "Racism, Culture, and Revolution: Ideology and Politics in the Poetry of Nicolás Guillén," *LARR* 17, no. 1 (1982):43–68.
 32. Hans Otto Dill, "De la exposición periodística a la representación artística: estudio crítico sobre Nicolás Guillén," *Revista de la Biblioteca Nacional José Martí* 14, no. 2 (May–Aug. 1972):65–80.
 33. Nicolás Guillén, *Páginas vueltas: memorias* (Havana: Ediciones Unión), 1982.
 34. José Piedra, "From Monkey Tales to Cuban Songs: On Signification," *Modern Language Notes* 100, no. 2 (May 1985):361–90.
 35. See Martha Cobb, *Harlem, Haiti, and Havana: A Comparative Critical Study of Langston Hughes, Jacques Roumain, and Nicolás Guillén* (Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1979). Also see her "Concepts of Blackness in the Poetry of Nicolás Guillén, Jacques Roumain, and Langston Hughes," *College Language Association Journal* 18 (Dec. 1974):262–72; and her doctoral dissertation, "The Black Experience in the Poetry of Nicolás Guillén, Jacques Roumain, and Langston Hughes," Catholic University of America, 1974.
 36. Jonathan Ngaté, "Coronation or Crucifixion? Man-Making Words and Ancestrality in Guillén, Césaire, and Senghor," *Afro-Hispanic Review* 4, no. 1 (1985):5–10, 22.
 37. *Les Poètes latino-américains devant la guerre civile d'Espagne (Nicolás Guillén, Pablo Neruda et César Vallejo)*, edited by Olver Gilberto de León (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1986).
 38. One critic who hopes to see such challenges is Vera M. Kutzinski. See her article, "The Miraculous Weapons of Nicolás Guillén and Aimé Césaire," *Callaloo* 9, no. 4 (Fall 1986):740–48; see also her doctoral dissertation, "From American Literature to New World Writing: Myth and History in William Carlos Williams, Jay Wright, and Nicolás Guillén," Yale University, 1985. See also her book, *Against the American Grain: Myth and History in William Carlos Williams, Jay Wright, and Nicolás Guillén* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987); and the special issue on Nicolás Guillén, *Callaloo* 10, no. 2 (Spring 1987), for which she was the guest editor.