



Lesbian Resistances: Social Representations of Afro-descendent Lesbian Women in Cuba

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Abstract

This study is an approach to the subject of Afro-descendant lesbians who have had to rescue history and to reinvent themselves within the potentialities that characterize the group such as resistance to difficulties. For this they have resorted to, among other strengths, arming themselves with the energies inherited from their grandmothers, ancestors who never let themselves be overcome, no matter how difficult the period. They always found a strategy to resist their harsh and historical realities, slavery being a principal example. The stereotyped thinking, internal and external, still imposed on many of these women, causes them to suffer multiple discriminations - as women, as lesbians, as Black and, in some cases, as transgender, and inhibits the practical expression of the true sorority which characterizes them. The advantage of this resistance, as noted by Michel Foucault, is that it is as inventive, it is as mobile and productive as power. It seeks ways of organizing to resist the effects of power, to not let oneself be dominated, going to the forefront at any cost, expanding and sharing creative ideas, leaving behind that domain of erased subjects and establishing dialogues of understanding with the alter ego. Using their voice with or without music.

Keywords: Resistance, Representation, Intersectionality, Afro-feminism.

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"Knowing yourself as black is living the experience of having been massacred in your identity, confused in your expectations, subjected to demands, compelled to alienated expectations. But it is also, and above all, the experience of committing yourself to rescuing your history and recreating your potential."

Neusa Santos Souza¹

Introduction

Leafing through the pages of Alice Walker's book *Searching for the Gardens of Our Mothers* (1974) in which she makes a beautiful reflection on Black women in the southern United States, including her mother, evoked my own memories of the stories of my two grandmothers.

Both were matriarchs, my paternal grandmother with 11 children and nine for my maternal grandmother. They were single mothers, seeing how much they have in common in their gardens, having known how to resist in the harsh reality of their time as well as each having developed experiences with their ancestors for many years. Both were spiritualists and showed that internal strength where the basic example of resistance could be put into practice, facing the experiences of colonial power along with what the patriarchy carries.

Alice W. (1974), in her book, establishes a conversation inspired by the words of Zora Neale Hurston, noting that Black women are called "the mule of the world," explaining that "we have been handed the burdens that everyone else - everyone else - refused to carry. They have called us 'Matriarchs,' 'Superwomen,' and 'Bad and Evil Bitches,' not to mention

'Castraters' and 'Sapphire's Mama'." (1974) The qualifiers have been many, and in reality represent the sacrifices made and disqualifications suffered for confronting patriarchy.

Later, reading the article by Jurema Werneck "Our steps come from far away" (2000) regarding the political strategies employed against sexism and racism developed within Black women's movements, we find the need to go even beyond that garden of our grandmothers, our ancestors. Thinking is guided towards the need for an intersectional analysis, as a result of being a woman, a Black woman and poor.

Jurema W. (2000) suggests that we go back to traditions, to the sacred myths of the African diaspora, where we can find female figures who "throughout history acted and continue to act as role models, as guides of identity's possibilities for the creation and recreation of different forms of black femininity"... traditions that in the 70s returned as organizing ideas-forces of the different factions of the anti-racist movement and mainly, the feminist anti-racism of Black women and their organizations.

In both references, these renowned Black feminists call upon us to review our history, to achieve representation or symbols, models that give us guidance and strength, that promote visibility and the image of recognition Black women need to expose the historical memory of slavery and colonization. As such, we must continue working intensively on recovering the memories of Black women who have remained invisible in our history for so long, and in this way, helping and guiding new generations, particularly in the case of Black women, who with that knowledge can revolutionize and liberate their representation in the social imaginary from the colonial mentality that has historically and incessantly humiliated us.

If recognizing our Black women as a mission of identity has been difficult, and even more so when they are Black as well as lesbians or free thinkers in their behaviour, how are they visibilised in this globalized world? As more stories of Black women in our history are unveiled, we will be better able to reveal the history of repression that lesbian women have endured.

In approaching the lesbian theme, Afro-descendants have had to rescue their relationship with the concrete historical events of colonization and slavery and seek to recreate it in the potentialities that they characterize as the resistances to difficulties. Their participation in the independence struggles and in the constitution of Cuban nationality must be rescued from our history.

As another lesbian Afro-feminist, Ochy Curiel (2011), often highlights: it is not only about decolonization of knowledge, but of the experience itself in the face of power and domination. [1]

There is still more work to be done on the subjectivity of women, lesbian or not, to show that we have been intransigent in addressing the issues of exclusion, something which inhibits the practical expression of true and necessary sorority that should characterize us, since the subjectivity of many of us has been impacted by the reinforcement of slavery and the psychological complexes of mental colonialism, which have both been built from power and culture, subsequently leading to stereotypical thinking, for white and Black folks both, in which white is seen as superior. As a consequence, we suffer from various forms of discrimination: as women, as Black and as lesbian.

Additionally, when some lesbians desire to present as butch or masculine, it adds another form of oppression and discrimination because they are typically rejected by men and/or other lesbian women.

The advantage is that resistance implies creativity; it is so inventive, so mobile and productive as power, that it seeks ways of organizing to resist the effects of power and not letting itself be dominated by coming out in front with different ways of self-representations. That being said, one can, on occasion, fall into violence as a defence.

In this work, we can see some examples of the realities faced in the growing globalization of this world, to get out of the domain of being erased subjects and establish dialogues of understanding with the alter ego.

The representation of Black Cuban lesbians in a globalized world

In addressing the subject of Black women, it brings with it the presence of Black Feminism in Cuba and carries within it the acknowledgment of successes from long struggles. One of these is a story written by Leyda Oquendo Barrios; this work focuses on Mariana Grajales, recognized today in Cuba as the Mother of the Country, a title well deserved. Barrios makes sure Mariana is known on her own terms and not just an identity in relation to her sons, who were fighters in the War of Independence in Cuba. Thus, Black women are already given visibility and an example, which helps with empowerment and cultivates identity pride.²

Likewise, it is worth acknowledging the efforts of the writer and historian Inés María Martiatu Terry who, despite her illness, also continued the battle to make visible and recognize the history of resistance of Cuban Black women.³

It is a pity that neither Leyda nor Lalita could see the transformation of their struggle into its current achievements. However, their presence is still evident in different events along with the work of Daysi Rubiera Castillo

that continued the “Afrocubanas Project.” Georgina Herrera Cárdenas’ work also continues to be a presence and influenced the new Black generations, as does her poetry book *Oriki for Georgina* (2017).⁴

The book *Emerging from Silence. Black Women in History*, recently compiled by Oilda Hevia Lanier and Daisy Rubiera Castillo (2016), is yet another example providing representation of hidden stories of women who owned enslaved people in Colonial Havana. It shows how prostitution was a strategy of freedom in the nineteenth century, the difficulty of accessing education as a woman, stories of Black women used as intermediaries in the colonial economy, their actual role in the war of independence and making visible the history of the first Black delegate in the republic. This is a feminine discourse of vindication from the years before the Cuban revolution, which allows new generations and those who still lack that necessary conscience to understand and feel pride in their identities.

These materials and the now more frequent debates in various spaces are already encouraging the necessary shifts within the Black population interested in these issues. It also of course includes Afro-descendant lesbian women, despite that on this topic there is still not much bibliography.

This makes clear the need to resort to examples showing how another form of representation is beginning: moving us from unauthorized subjects, populations erased from the popular imaginary to the search for recognition and respect with all the diverse practices human beings express.

Three sources of representation

Las Krudas, Logbona y Oremita.

Taking advantage of the words of the experienced feminist Marcela Lagarde (1990) who states that “being human” means having as a possibility a diversity of experiences and the inclusion of women as subjects in a new humanity and as protagonists of our own lives ... In conditions of equity [2] ... thus enriching life, here we will see experiences of protagonists.

The emergence of the lesbian and Afro-feminist Cuban rappers called “Las Krudas Cubensi” shows how the use of a cultural manifestation, such as rap, can break the historical subordination of women by patriarchy. They shift the social imaginary, breaking the position of subaltern identity and building respect for difference through their lyrics.⁵

They faced and named social inequalities through hip-hop, full of strength to fight for the rights of their racial identities. Their work was not easy for many people to digest, not even for other lesbians. They suffered bullying and rejection, but they persisted, resisted, and are succeeding. Their ideas were too emancipatory for conservative thought. They recognize that they come out of that rebellion of the Cuban people, but are interested in a wider liberation.

It was an intense battle they had to fight; because of the lack of women in the rap industry, machismo and patriarchy prevail. In addition to this, their discourse and music were fresh and critical, and the fact that they were lesbians and Afro-descendants complicated the battle they had to face as they looked for ways to interrupt mental colonization.

Starting in 1996, Krudes Cubensi sought the blessings of their ancestral generations in order to defend their work. Their unusual lyrics got out into the streets, thrilled critical and conscious minds and set an important precedent. Despite not living in Cuba anymore, they are a frequent and evident presence. In their lyrics, they continue to name the experiences of fighting against discrimination as Afro-Cuban immigrants and its consequences.

Looking at the history of their work, it is evident that this resistance towards mental colonialism is inherited from their Afro-descendant women ancestors. Their themes touch on lessons, which emerged without fear. They communicate in direct, open, and hard language, which summons the growth and self-esteem of Black women. It touches both the psychological and the emotional and cultivates racial pride. They show that it is possible to decolonize your mind and contribute to the construction of representation through songs for Black and non-Black women. ([Table 1](#))

From the beginning, their songs addressed topics such as the meaning of menstruation in women as a form of resistance, exercising their power. In this way, they called for the raising of self-esteem of women and in turn confronting the macho texts used by male hip-hop groups at that stage. To show that women also have their strength and power, Krudas Cubensi called them ebony warriors and urged them to recognize themselves as beautiful even with their bembas and their black skin. Knowing that the fight against patriarchal culture was difficult, they called upon women to unite to face without fear, a collective fight that also involved the defence of their racial and sexual identity.

In search of better development and resources for their art, they began a journey from Russia to Mexico, finally settling in El Paso, Mexico.

Facing difficult realities in their life as emigrants, they continued to create lyrics full of strength and added other resistant forces of the globalized world. Knowing that resistance is inventive, mobile, and productive like power, they exercise it. It is the force that, contrary to dominance, arises from its daily exercise and is linked to the breadth of all their musical experience and knowledge, uniting it to the power of that internal force to achieve their dream (Foucault 1993).

In their trajectory, they also faced other experiences of discrimination as migrants. This is how they came to write protest songs that reflect their way of not letting themselves be defeated, writing and singing songs about the racism they suffered in Spain and the changes and adjustments that the migrant identity implies.

They have never stopped singing songs that address the beauty of Black people and their physique. It has been part of their constant activism to raise the self-esteem of women, teaching about the importance of self-recognition and self-worth without being influenced by what others think.

They address issues such as not allowing themselves to continue colonizing with the idealization of western beauty. They try to be very specific with goals for their songs, and break into themes that many people find shocking. However, they remain unconcerned and they keep looking for modifications, changes in ideas, for growth. Their struggle does not stop, and although some people evaluate it as countercurrent and irreverent, they really reach deep every day, finding followers who use their experiences and grow with their support.

Their messages

The lesbian Black woman recognizes how much there has been to face and resist to reach a position that implies transformation. Every time that Krudas Cubensi make their presentations here in Cuba they have a more understanding and welcoming audience, they are now able to gather a wider audience as winners in the fight against social inequality and discrimination, minds are more open to their truth. As if that were not enough, they have opened paths for others both inside and outside the country while maintaining their Cuban identity within the panorama of that style of music nationally and internationally. Their albums have won awards in national and international competitions in music festivals such as Cuba Disco, among others. They have shown that with elements of resistance you can achieve transformation.

Indicating subjectivities with new forms of social representations.

In conversation with the Cuban historian, then identified in his process of religious recognition with the Yoruba name, Logbona Olokunee, later changing when his trans identity brought him to the name Tito Mitjans Alayón, shows another kind of self-making, and self-representation regarding to normative gender system.

In moments of proximity and collaboration with "Oremi," a space opened for lesbian and bisexual women, promoted by the National Centre for Sexual Education (CENESEX), Tito showed through his focus as an Afro-descendant feminist lesbian, as he identified at the time, where it was possible to debate the few advances the space was making as well as its official status. He referred to the discomfort of his non-normative experiences, recognizing himself then as a masculine woman made him feel that he did not fit in that space, the discomforts of the lack of understanding of diversity within diversity, the rejection he sometimes breathed, comments with which we agreed - those were topics that were

not debated there. From there, ideas of practice emerged in spontaneous, independent actions with friends that made Tito feel more related to.

From his role as a university professor, he continued to delve into the contradictions of the disputed approach to gender, those theories that reinforce binarism where he still did not feel recognized and began to better understand ideas of intersectionality, thus contrasting the difference between affective-sexual and heterosexual relationships with being a woman, Black, of poor origin, from a marginal neighbourhood and not heterosexual. His ties to the hip-hop movement and in particular to representations of Las Krudas deepened and directed his Black feminism.

Adding to his interests were new approaches to Queer theory (Cuir), which came closer and closer to the search for what he needed to represent - a theme that has possibilities to defend in different spaces, including in the colloquium held at the Christian Centre for Reflection and Dialogue in Cárdenas where we presented together. A space that makes it possible to meet different specialists, straight or not, for a more open-minded and understanding debate.

Although he still did not feel full understanding there in that auditorium, the fact that the topic could be placed on the discussion table was compensation.

Undoubtedly, his new self-representation played an important role in spaces like the hip-hop community in the addressing of queer identities. In addition to the songs, the open, direct messages, and messages of resistance of the Krudas energy and disposition to fight played an essential role, the experiences of that space promoted critical debates on

raciality, and the vindication of the beauty of Afro-descendant women, trans and queer people.

One of the lessons that Tito shared was that resistance is an expression of survival, and along with Black feminist theory he reclaimed more alternative daily political strategies such as the creation of shared spaces that promote debate, generate Black queer politics and joy. This was how "Proyecto Motivito" was with Eduardo Digen and Afibola Sifunola. It fostered debates on a variety of topics in the LGBTIQ community on a queer Afro-feminist wavelength. Numerous alliances were made with other autonomous collectives and projects and they took advantage of the few institutional spaces that were generating actions against gender violence such as the national week to "Fight violence against women" on November 25 and thus introduced intersectional approaches that involve radicalised queer and trans identities.

Another way of putting auto-representation into practice was the creation and circulation of the *Boletín TUTUTUTU*. Made with a small team, it created a space for the works of other Afro-feminists, making sure to promote and visibilise their work, their stories, histories, and those of other queer, trans, and non-binary friends.⁶ It made these identities visible and additionally reported on the work and cultural activities of Afro-descendant entrepreneurs in other countries, resulting in beautiful alliances, especially among women. After years of being involved with anti-racist activism, Tito faced other expressions of the structurally racist system in Mexico among other new discriminations. It is not easy emotionally but his resistance helps him work towards his dream.

A Third length of representation

Oremi was a meeting space for lesbian and bisexual women created on 23 December 2005. Many women attended at the beginning but due to a lack of prior organizing experience or clear goals, it was not able to achieve stability.

In the beginning, Black people were in the minority. One could argue that it was stratified based on class as well. Despite its inclusive politics, inclusivity was not achieved at its first stage. Participation of Black lesbians was difficult to maintain since there was not a focus on fighting our own racism or internalized homophobia, never mind centring Black feminism.

As with the first meeting space, there were many ups and downs due to lack of experience, knowledge, and exclusion. There were many attempts to shift the space, especially after waiting many years for the creation of space for debate and the development of lesbian activism, but there were still stigmas and myths, misunderstanding and discrimination within the group. People with experience of activism were consulted, but their contributions were not received well.

Regardless, it prompted many of the group to investigate different paths in order to defend their truth and create their own representation and self-representation. Compared with other countries, there were similar dynamics and similar battles. The feminist approach was incipient, sometimes radical, and the motivations and expectations of the members were very diverse though they also wanted to put these into practice. A network of lesbian groups within Cuba did not exist at that time except for one group in Santiago de Cuba, one of the eastern provinces of the country.

After ten years, one can find that the group has achieved stronger cohesion. Connecting across differences within the group allows us to

centre respect and recognition of the diversity that characterizes women and their sexuality. The rights that were not obtained in the past have now been attained.

OREMI is located within CENESEX in Havana. As part of a national network of women, today 90% of its members are Afro-descendant. They worked together with Las Isabelas, the space in Santiago de Cuba where they were already leading eight groups from the rest of the country.⁷ They carry out friendly exchanges and meetings and have national and international workshops, which switch between different provinces. Although the groups of Las Isabelas were the first ones to seek their representation through joint mobilization with the Cuban Women's Federation, those from Havana broke canons creating their representation and popular activism with the work of acting with a drag king show.

That performance of drag had always been in the hands of travestis, trans women and gay men characterized by femininity and brilliance, which in its role of gender construction is defined as female. In the OREMI group, as part of its activities, a peña called "Entre Amigas" or in English, "Between Friends" was created; this took place in a city cinema in the neighbourhood of Nuevo Vedado with the support of various cultural institutions.

In this space, they developed a project where Afro-descendant lesbians challenged patriarchal power by performing drag, which up until this point had been an uncommon cultural performance.

Starting and claiming this work of societal acceptance represented by Afro-descendant lesbian women had seemed impossible to achieve, but constant work, strength and resistance has been breaking down stigmas,

demystifying thoughts and opening consciousness, as many of the people who attend are straight.

With so many experiences exchanged through the aforementioned emerging diverse spaces, an awareness was created which allowed the inclusion of the transformism-diversity project, such as cultural centres in historically heterosexual spaces with the actions created by Argelia Fellove, “Afrodiverso: Mujeres Afrofeministas” or in English “Afro-diverse: Afro-feminist Women,”” a cultural project in Mantilla, forming one the most important spaces for the black queer drag king culture.⁸

There are already several cultural and musical centres that enjoy drag performances of masculinity with respect and without horror. The creation of each performance space has helped to build understanding, support and nurture similar work in other locations. It was not an easy job to start, but it was very powerful and created resistance in the face of difficulties.

Conclusions

As Sueli Carneiro (2001) stated, the examples presented in this text show how Afro-descendant women have managed in their own ways to represent a Black feminism based on their experiences and realities. Although at times it could be interpreted as rebellion, seeking to break out of the historical norms established by a patriarchal culture, its position of resistance and defence has paved the way.

It can be seen how the discourses that we are historically accustomed to receiving are from a heterosexual mentality and therefore become a form of oppression and domination. Faced with this, it was sought to achieve a discourse that created its own category, involving the need to understand diversity and thus touch the subjectivity of the hetero mind,

which sometimes can be difficult to recognize, name and process. When in a song Las Krudas says, "I am singing for my different people" it is particularized, it is taken into account that there are other women, with other realities. Thus, the contract of the domain of heterosexuality is broken, showing other representations.

The messages of Las Krudas make evident the liberation that comes with mental decolonization, when power is confronted, and when Black women have a close relationship with their histories and ancestries. All of this can serve as a path towards the representation of the Black and lesbian Cuban woman.

Despite the long history of the Afro-descendant movement and political activism in Cuba, perspectives with intersectional understanding which articulate issues of gender, race, heterosexism and social vulnerability are more contemporary.

Examples like the book *Afrocubanas* (2011) shows that the intimate relationship and connection with their female ancestors: "searching in the gardens of the grandmothers" creates representation by trying to touch and break the subjectivity of colonial thought. Also the cultural project "The Club of the Esendrú"^[9] summons so many young people of different identities to train and debate and continues today to play a great role in the transformation of new subjectivities among others, especially youth.⁹

The different representations made possible by the different groups allow an understanding and awareness of the existence of other realities that Black women live by modifying the narrative of how we were built.

The achievements obtained in the changes of subjectivities with the topic of lesbian Afro-feminism have not been the result of an articulated

political or scientific proposal, but is due to daily resistance paving the way.

Although different spaces defend this issue, it is still necessary to work on this and other issues in alliance, achieve comprehension and synergy with the different groups, spaces and projects that work towards a Black feminist approach and which work to get the support of social centres.

The consciousness-raising role of hip-hop and drag is recognised as a strategy to mark subjectivities that are influencing other groups and demonstrate continuity.

Although two of the three representative sources are not affiliated with official organizations, they also do not have issues with each other or with the named institutions.

In each source evaluated, strategies and paths have been observed to understand their purposes. Las Krudas no longer live in Cuba and that is a challenge. Tito Mitjans has also left Cuba and now lives in Chiapas, Mexico. Negotiating immigration has a cost, but what they learn they always share with their country in one way or another.

The three sources have in common the implementation of not having any fear of facing new and difficult situations since they have that inherited ancestral strength which allows them to be resistant to all oppression.

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Annex:

Table 1

Excerpts of Krudas Cubensi first artistic period. [3]

In their beginnings, Krudas Cubensi talked about the awareness and recognition of what menstruation means for each woman in their songs, totally contested for that time, 1995. One of the most significant says “120 red hours each month... blood from within...Krudas Revolution manifestation...girls raise your self-esteem” (Odaymar Cuesta y Olivie Prendes, Cubensi Hip Hop) (2003, 120 Horas Rojas)

- “No being an object of valorisation... You are beautiful as you are; ebony in bloom...intelligence is your virtue” (Odaymar Cuesta y Olivie Prendes, Eres Bella, CD: Cubensi Hip Hop, 2003)
- “Ebony’s warriors the time to break the chains has come” (Odaymar Cuesta y Olivie Prendes, Eres Bella, CD: Cubensi Hip Hop, 2003)
- “I am my hair, I am religion, I am the proud of my mouth, black kruda” (Odaymar Cuesta y Olivie Prendes, Eres Bella, CD: Cubensi Hip Hop, 2003)
- “Our fight is collective...we are more than a movement”(Odaymar Cuesta y Olivie Prendes, Eres Bella, CD: Cubensi Hip Hop, 2003)
- “I am still here with feminist point of view.. Ifà is our right”(Odaymar Cuesta y Olivie Prendes, Eres Bella, CD: Cubensi Hip Hop, 2003)
- “Hip Hop will be our protector and elf...we are 100 female horses for your intellect” (Odaymar Cuesta y Olivie Prendes, Eres Bella, CD: Cubensi Hip Hop, 2003)
- “It is our identity that we are fighting for...”(Odaymar Cuesta y Olivie Prendes, Eres Bella, CD: Cubensi Hip Hop, 2003)

Table 2.

Fragments of Krudas Cubensi songs in their new artistic phase (Odaymar Cuesta y Olivie Prendes: “No me dejaron entrar”, CD Krudas Compilación, Austin 2009.)

- “They don't let me enter Spain....they said that Cuba is a bad trick”
- “Travel is a challenge of change...they have the right to migrate”
- “Loving everyone you like will never be illegal”
- “We don't need you Machismo...liberation for all”
- “Women in resistance... Krudas are here now to change your life”

Table 3.

Fragments of songs with self-esteem thematic autoestima (Odaymar Cuesta, “Gorda”, 2008, Quilombo Radio: Progreso Rythms 1)

- “I got a lot of flesh...more than 40 on my waist, ...the fat woman is here...”
- “why consume colonized bodies”
- “I am resisting as fat, as black, as warrior”
- “Crazy because the lyrics express without concern what people talk about”
- “Crazy...Loose and single women”
- I am singing for my different people
- I am the only queen and my crown is to change ideas
- Here we are...maybe in solitude we are wasting ourselves
- And our words are going away or maybe just on some and other memories remain
- And some other attitude has been showing and here we are breathing

¹ Neusa Santos Souza: *Tornar-se Negro*. Rio de Janeiro. Ediciones Graal, 1983, p. 23.

² Dr. Leyda Oquendo Barrios. Cuban anthropologist, journalist, historian and Africanist. (June 25, 1941-2008) She dedicated great efforts to visibilise the role of the Maceo Grajales family and in particular to Major General Antonio Maceo Grajales and his mother Mariana Grajales Coello. Oquendo Barrios spread the history and development of African countries, above all focusing on the work on the African presence in Cuba and particularly in the processes of slave resistance and Maroon, thus showing the research in history and ancestors and their resistance models.

³ Inés María Martiatu, (Lalita) Cuban Theatrer Researcher, Writer, and Narrator. Initiator of Cuban Afro-feminism. (1942 -2013) With Daisy Rubiera she produced the anthology *Afrocubanas: History, Thoughts, and Cultural Practices*. She has published a number works always addressing the need to make feminine and Afro-descendant issues visible. In these publications there is always reference to the need for work that will enrich the pride of the Afro-descendant people, and for this, it uses anecdotes as well as leading to a history of resistance.

⁴ Daysi Rubiera Castillo. Cuban writer, historian, and researcher. Author of the testimonies of Black women. Her best-known book: *Reyita, Sencillamente*, referring to the story of her mother Maria de los Reyes Castillo, is the testimony of a nonagenarian Black woman. Another important work is the compilation *Afrocubanas*. Also coordinates debate space also called *Afrocubanas*. 15 June 1939. Looking for exemplary stories to show the different conflicts and difficulties experienced by a group that is not very visible or recognized by racial discrimination, it is based on the sad experiences of her nonagenarian mother and her own, which she completes in the uprisings of women's stories alike. Also taking up the resources of power and strength to confront and resist them; Georgina Herrera Cárdenas. Afro-cuban poet. Writer of radio novels and short stories, including dramas and scripts for radio, theatre and television. Her poetry focuses on Afro-cuban culture. She has published more than six books. Outstanding poet of the Cuban twentieth century. Born on April 23, 1936 of humble origin, she leaves a province to resist the onslaught of a hard life alone in Havana and becomes the poet of today where in all her work you can see how much she had to face to resist and even overcome today. Tearing his skin opens his heart and you learn in his works the strength that his ancestors have inspired him.

⁵ Krudas Cubensi, also known as Las Krudas, is an Afro-feminist vegan hip-hop group. With their music and activism they confront normative heterosexuality with the tools of Black feminism. They are a symbol of the Cuban LGBTIQ community, defenders of those rights and social causes that dignify women, queer, and trans people. They recognize themselves as queer feminists and advocates of vegan, healthy, Krudas food. See more information: Saunders, T. L. (2015). *Cuban Underground Hip-hop: Black Thoughts, Black Revolution, Black Modernity*. University of Texas.

⁶ *Boletín TUTUTUTU* was a Afro-feminist queer fanzine. Organized by Afibola Sifunola and Tito Mitjans from 2015 to 2016. Despite its short life, this zine centred the work, poetry, and ideas of black trans and cis women and the Afro-cuban queer community. More information: <https://www.facebook.com/boletintutututu/>

⁷ National Centre for Sex Education (CENESEX) is a governmental centre with programmes on the defence of sexual rights. It has the support of a group of specialists that make up the Cuban Multidisciplinary Society for the Study of Sexuality (SOCUMES) and from this the Sexual Diversity Section is born with a network that groups all the spaces that defend the rights of the LGBTIQ community in the country.

⁸ "Argelia Fellove es una dura."

<https://www.tremendanota.com/argelia-fellove-activista-transformista-es-una-dura/>

⁹ Club del Espendré is a socio-cultural project created by the rappers and activists Magia Lopez and Alexey Rodriguez in 2008. From 2016 they acquired more overseas participation from other activists and intellectuals such as Roberto Surbano and Aracely Rodriguez. This project has a deeply positive impact on the Afro-Cuban communities of Havana. More information:

https://www.facebook.com/elclubdelespendru/posts/591434018142956?_tn__=K-R,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q0w_MJ0IIE