

POSTCOLONIAL HUMOUR: JOKES IN ANA MENÉNDEZ'S "IN CUBA I WAS A GERMAN SHEPHERD"

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ABSTRACT:

This article discusses the utilization of jokes as humorous ritual performances in Ana Menéndez's short story "In Cuba I Was a German Shepherd". In the narrative, joke-telling becomes a coping mechanism for the postcolonial Cuban exile because it creates a liminal space within which the performer asserts his identity creatively engages with his emotions outside of the restrictive societal expectations associated with masculinity; the audience temporarily suspends and/or engages with their realities and shared histories during the joke; and the two entities form a folkgroup as a result of the speakable discourse created by the jokes. Ultimately, jokes become oral forms of postcolonial folklore used to discuss the identity and experience of the individual in specific cultural contexts. interface promotes a site of constant flux and agony; contestation and protestation in which all identities are dissolved into an ultimate fluidity. It is from this state of overlapping identity crisis there germinates a third space of negotiated identity, a hybrid culture that threatens the overriding manipulations of the colonial discourse..

Keywords: Jokes, Cuba, Caribbean, Diaspora, Folklore