



# Cuban-American Literature of Exile: From Person to Persona (New World Studies)

*Isabel Alvarez Borland*

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The Cuban revolution of 1959 initiated a significant exodus, with more than 700,000 Cubans eventually settling in the United States. This community creates a major part of what is now known as the Cuban diaspora. In *Cuban-American Literature of Exile*, Isabel Alvarez Borland forces the dialogue between literature and history into the open by focusing on narratives that tell the story of the 1959 exodus and its aftermath.

Alvarez Borland pulls together a diverse array of Cuban-American voices writing in both English and Spanish--often from contrasting perspectives and approaches--over several generations and waves of immigration. Writers discussed include Guillermo Cabrera Infante, Reinaldo Arenas, Roberto Fernandez, Achy Obejas, and Cristina Garcia. The author's analysis of their works uncovers a movement from narratives that reflect the personal loss caused by the historical fact of exile, to autobiographical writings that reflect the need to search for a new identity in a new language, to fictions that dramatize the authors' constructed Cuban-American personae. If read collectively, she argues, these sometimes dissimilar texts appear to be in dialogue with one another as they all document a people's quest to reinvent themselves outside their nation of origin.

*Cuban-American Literature of Exile* encourages readers to consider the evolution of Cuban literature in the United States over the last forty years. Alvarez Borland defines a new American literature of Cuban heritage and documents the changing identity of an exiled literature.

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