



The African Presence and Influence on the Cultures of the Americas

Brenda M. Greene

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'The African Presence and Influence on the Cultures of the Americas', an interdisciplinary collection of essays by scholars and writers whose disciplines include but are not limited to literature, languages, linguistics, history, sociology and psychology, reflects the complexity and diversity of the historical and cultural legacy of the African diasporic reality and provides a critical perspective for examining the persistence of African cultural traditions in the Americas. These writers and scholars explore the ways in which people connected by moments in history and the common legacies of racism, classism, colonialism and imperialism, have used literature, music, dance, religion and cultural rites and rituals to survive and resist. The poetry and prose of Afro-Cuban icon, Nicolas Guillen and Afro-American literary legend, Gwendolyn Brooks provide a context for exploring these themes. Guillen and Brooks symbolize the triumph of the human spirit and the 'Africanisms' present amongst people who share a common legacy originating in Africa. Building on the themes in the work of these poets, the scholars and writers in 'The African Presence and Influence on the Cultures of the Americas' examine the nature, persistence and impact of these themes in literature, language, music, dance and religion. The scholarship generated in this collection has implications for the ways in which we read, study and teach cultural studies, literature, history, language, African American Studies, Caribbean Studies and African Studies.

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