

War, Exile & Marginality - In Marjorie Agosín's Poetry

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Who is Marjorie Agosín?



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Marjorie Agosín, a Chilean poet who migrated to the United States in her youth due to civil war in her country, now uses her own life experience to write about the dangers of war, the pains of exile and the suffering of the marginal. For her, as for many other poets, poetry is a peaceful but powerful weapon against injustice. Through poetry, she fights for the basic human rights and liberties that all people deserve. In her eyes, poetry can awaken our consciousness to injustices and encourage us to take the steps necessary to make the world better for all.

How is this relevant to us?

1. Canada is a country of immigrants who come to escape from various circumstances of which war, exile and marginality can be just a few. This is everybody's reality.
2. Poetry and literature are threatened as forms of expression in our modern media society. Let us not forget these important arts.

What is this essay all about?

I analyzed three of her poems to explore what she states about war, exile and marginality through her poems and what ideas she tries to communicate in her writing. The poems analyzed are all taken out of her bilingual poetry book: *Mother, Speak to Us of War / Madre, h́ablanos de la guerra*. And are titled: "La frontera / The border", "Durante el bombardeo / During the bombing" and "Perdonar / Forgive"

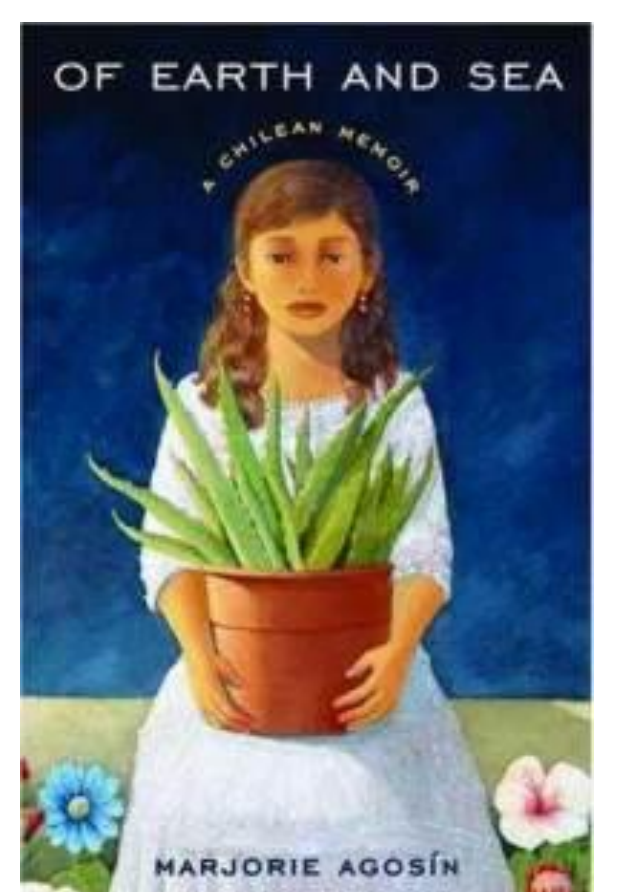
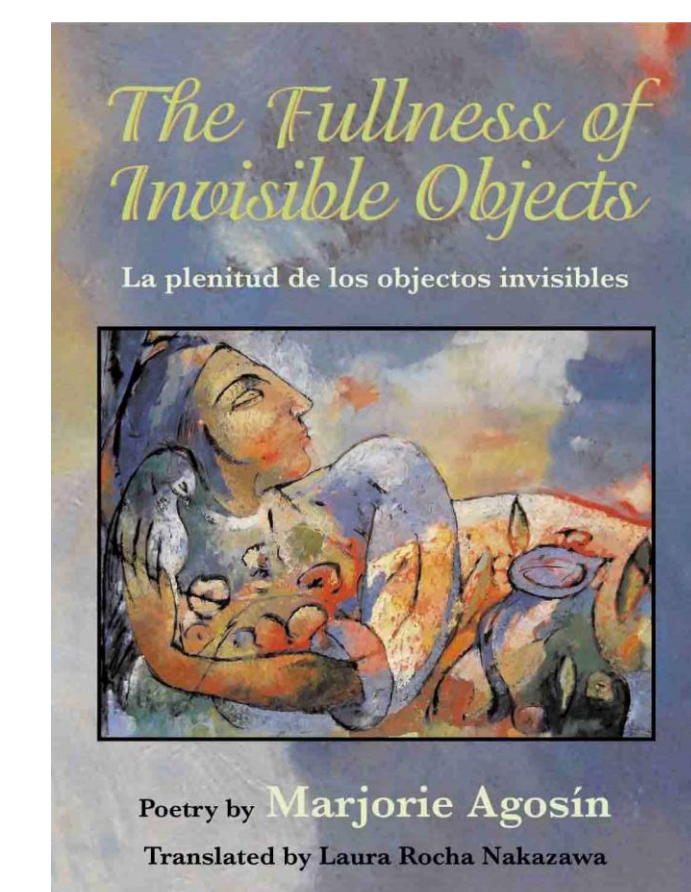
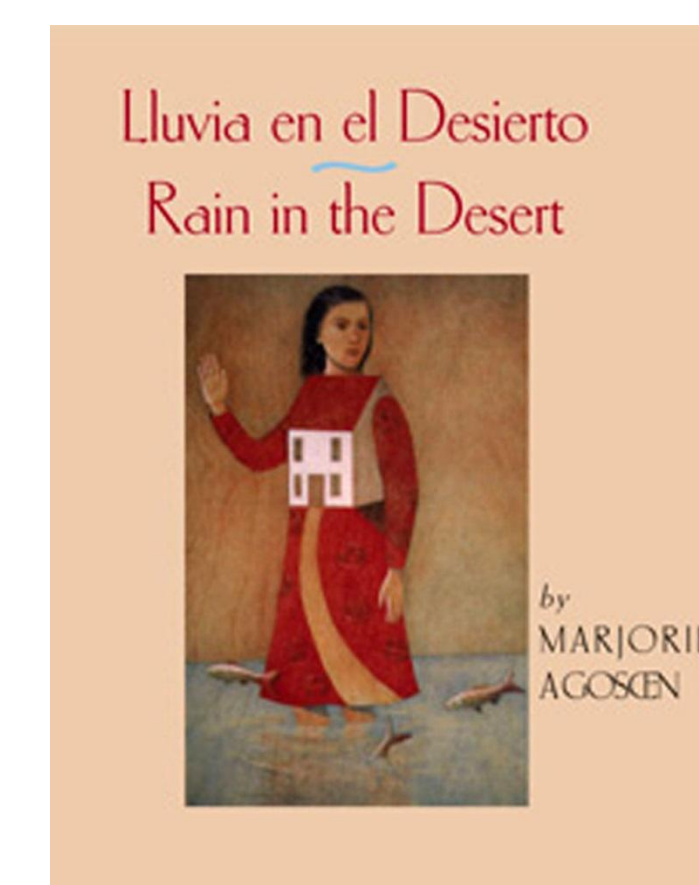
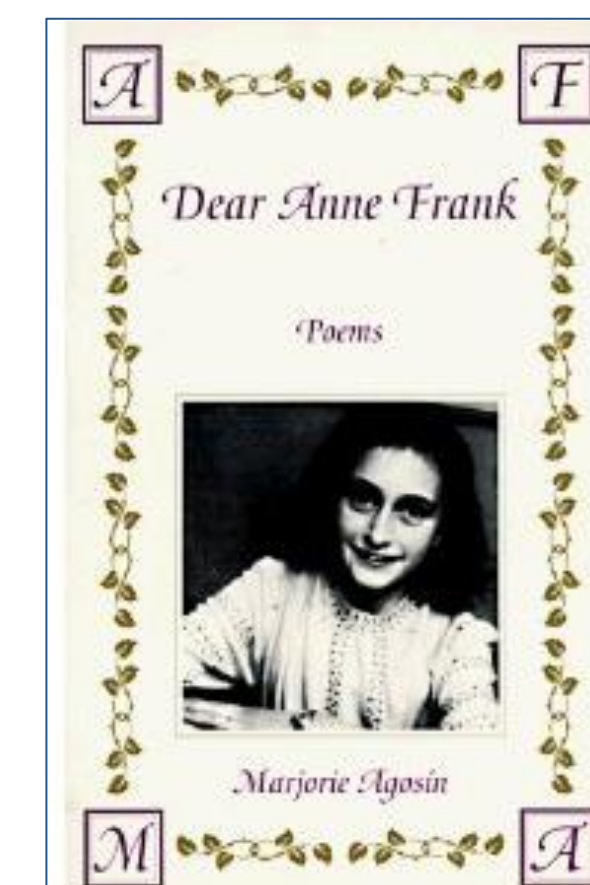
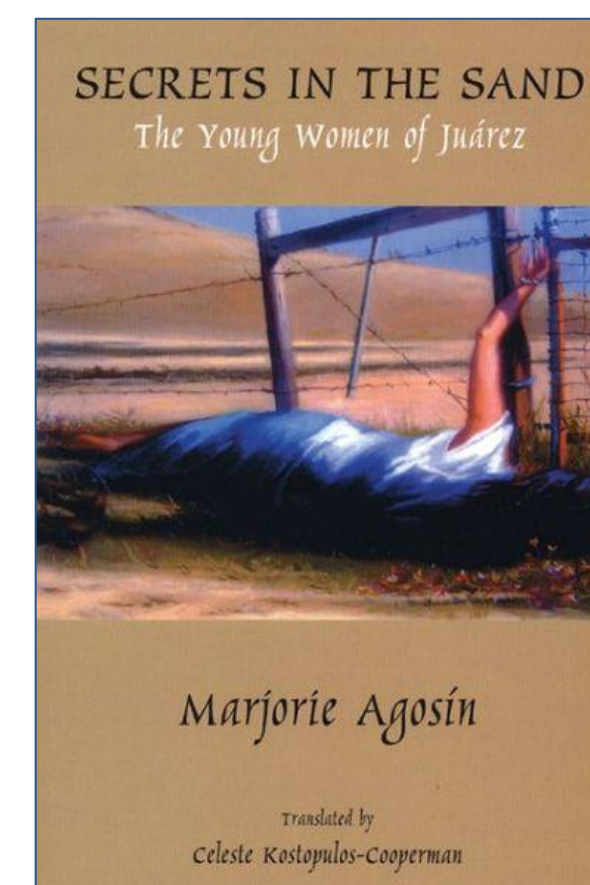
What did I find out?

For Agosín, war and exile are very much connected to the experience of marginality that she expresses in her poetry through the voices of women and through references to Jewish tradition and history. According to her, these fully embody the marginal experience. Her poems scream out the injustices of the violence of war and coerced exile both in Latin America and in the United States. Her poems do not provide a solution in the sense of giving a recipe, but in the sense that they impel the reader to do something about this.

Background research

In my essay, I first consulted scholarly articles and books about Agosín's life and work, and I listened to a radio interview with her to get some background and understanding regarding her personal experiences and her motivation to write.

For bibliography please see printed hand-outs



Oh, and...

The essay is in Spanish...

For further questions please contact me at: sukha108@yorku.ca