



The Eve/Hagar Paradigm in the Fiction of Quince Duncan

Dellita Martin-Ogunsola

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Born in Costa Rica in 1940, Quince Duncan has penned an impressive body of work, including novels, short stories, essays, and literary and cultural criticism. Despite his reputation as Costa Rica's leading novelist, Duncan remains one of the least studied writers. Dellita Martin-Ogunsola seeks to remedy this inequity with *The Eve/Hagar Paradigm in the Fiction of Quince Duncan*.

In this first book-length study in English devoted to Duncan's work, Martin-Ogunsola explores the issues of race, class, and gender in five of Duncan's major works published during the 1970s. Focusing primarily on the roles of women, Martin-Ogunsola uses the figures of Eve and the Egyptian slave Hagar to provide, through metaphor, an in-depth analysis of the female characters portrayed in Duncan's prose. Specifically, the Eve/Hagar paradigm is employed to examine how the essential characteristics of femininity play out in the context of ethnicity and caste. The book begins with *Dawn Song* (1970), the story of Antillean immigrants struggling with migration, oppression, and resistance while adapting to a new environment, and continues through *Dead-End Street* (1979), a novel exploring the ramifications of the myth, perpetrated through history, that defines Costa Rica in terms of Euro-Hispanic culture.

Martin-Ogunsola illustrates Duncan's use of a female presence that challenges the traditional treatment of women in literature. Spanning the period between the initial settlement of the Atlantic region of Costa Rica during the early years of the twentieth century to the 1948 Costa Rican Civil War, Martin-Ogunsola's book invites the reader to view the world through the eyes of Duncan's female characters.

The Eve/Hagar Paradigm in the Fiction of Quince Duncan examines some of the most compelling issues of contemporary Latin American literature and illustrates how a prominent Costa Rican writer deconstructs the stereotype of woman as wife/lover/slave. In the process, Duncan finds his own voice. Exposing aspects of Costa Rican society that have historically been kept in the shadows, this volume makes a significant contribution to our knowledge of the Latin American literary canon.

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