



Dance Between Two Cultures: Latino Caribbean Literature Written in the United States

William Luis

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Dance Between Two Cultures: Latino Caribbean Literature Written in the United States William Luis Offers insights on Latino Caribbean writers born or raised in the United States who are at the vanguard of a literary movement that has captured both critical and popular interest.

In this groundbreaking study, William Luis analyzes the most salient and representative narrative and poetic works of the newest literary movement to emerge in Spanish American and U.S. literatures. The book is divided into three sections, each focused on representative Puerto Rican American, Cuban American, and Dominican American authors. Luis traces the writers' origins and influences from the nineteenth century to the present, focusing especially on the contemporary works of Oscar Hijuelos, Julia Alvarez, Cristina Garcia, and Piri Thomas, among others. While engaging in close readings of the texts, Luis places them in a broader social, historical, political, and racial perspective to expose the tension between text and context.

As a group, Latino Caribbeans write an ethnic literature in English that is born of their struggle to forge an identity separate from both the influences of their parents' culture and those of the United States. For these writers, their parents' country of origin is a distant memory. They have developed a culture of resistance and a language that mediates between their parents' identity and the culture that they themselves live in.

Latino Caribbeans are engaged in a metaphorical dance with Anglo Americans as the dominant culture. Just as that dance represents a coming together of separate influences to make a unique art form, so do both Hispanic and North American cultures combine to bring a new literature into being. This new body of literature helps us to understand not only the adjustments Latino Caribbean cultures have had to make within the larger U.S. environment but also how the dominant culture has been affected by their presence.

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