





Andrea Sacchi, 'Hagar and Ishmael in the Desert' (1630)



Rubens, 'Hagar leaves the House of Abraham'



Rubens, 'Assumption of the Virgin'





Hermine Schafer, 'Hagar and Ishmael Seeking Water' (1964)

The Annunciation of Hagar

Now you have conceived to bear a son;
you shall call him Ishmael;
for the Lord has given heed to your being so harshly
treated.

He shall be a wild ass of a man,
with his hand against everyone,
and everyone's hand against him,
and he shall live at odds with all his kin.

- (Genesis 16:11-12)



- And God heard the voice of the boy; and the messenger of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her: What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid; for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. Come, lift up the boy, and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make a great nation of him.

☞ (Genesis 21:17-18)

A 'text of terror'

His son by the slave woman was born according to the flesh; but his son by a free woman was born as the result of divine promise ...

Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in slavery with her children.

But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother.

Galatians 4:23-6

ABRAHAM'S LEGACY *(Gal 4:21-31)*

The FACTS

HAGAR
ISHMAEL
ORDINARY WAY

2 Mothers
(4:22)

2 Sons
(4:22-23)

2 Births
(4:23)

SARAH
ISAAC
BY PROMISE

The FIGURES

Mt SINAI
EARTHLY
ENSLAVED

Mountains
(4:24 cf Heb 12:22)

Jerusalem
(4:25-26)

Status
(4:25-26)

Mt ZION
HEAVENLY
FREE

FUTURE

RACE
DISINHERITED

Descendants
(4:28 cf Gal 3:6-7)

Outcome
(4:30)

GRACE
HEIRS

Jill Robbins, *Prodigal Son, Elder Brother: Interpretation and Alterity in Augustine, Petrarch, Kafka, Levinas* (1991)



‘When Augustine ‘casts out’ Hagar, he casts out not just the otherness or alterity of the Judaic, but a textual alterity as well ... thus, while the suppression of the Judaic makes the figural discourse possible, it also makes it impossible.’

Dolores Williams, *Sisters in the Wilderness* (1993)

“the black ethnicity of Hagar and her son Ishmael in the Bible served as a major source for the proslavery imperative to exclude African Americans from America’s white power base”

“African Americans did not accommodate themselves to the Bible. Rather, they accommodated the Bible to the urgent necessities of their lives.”

“the patriarchal prohibition of Hagar’s sexuality in the Old Testament as the moment when female rule in the world is eclipsed”

Dolores Williams, *Sisters in the Wilderness* (1993)

“Sarah’s concern about Ishmael inheriting suggests that Ishmael is not a slave, because among the early Hebrews (and in early Mesopotamian law) the slave-son of the master’s concubines could not inherit unless their father had given them equal rank with the sons of free-born wives, by legal adoption.”

Mary Grey, 'Feminist Theology' (1999)

“For womanist theology the person of Hagar is crucial, symbolizing the woman who is rejected on the grounds of race, sex and class, yet at the same time is the recipient of a divine revelation.”



Steven Kepnes, *The Future of Jewish Theology* (2012)

- Hagar is at once the 'other' who comes from Egypt, the land of exile and slavery, and the wife of the patriarch Abraham, through whom all the peoples of the earth are blessed ... if Islam is rooted in the Hebrew scriptures, what this opens up is a new possibility to see Islam as not opposed to the Judeo-Christian tradition of monotheism but, indeed, as a part of it. Through Hagar and Ishmael, Islam finds its place as simultaneously the first child of Abraham and the third stage in the development of monotheism'.

Tabari, *Tarikh*.



Gabriel called to her, saying: Who are you? She replied, I am Hagar, mother of Abraham's son. And he said: To whom did he entrust you? and she replies, He entrusted me to God, to which the angel replies: He entrusted you to One who is sufficient. The boy rubbed the ground with his toe, and the well of Zamzam appeared.

Ali Shariati, *Hajj*.

From among all humanity, a woman,
From among all women, a slave,
And from among all slaves, a black maid!



Abd al-Majid Hammu, *Hajar bayn al-hurriyya wa'l-'ubudiyya* (1993)

- The well-mannered woman who obeys her husband, who believes fully in God and whose husband settles her in Mecca, who is at peace with her status as second wife, who bears a child and is grateful to God for His blessings, and never complains; the model of the righteous and believing woman.

Rifaat Hassan, 'Islamic Hagar and her Family' (1995)

- [The image of autonomous femaleness is] important not only for Muslim daughters of Hagar but for all women who are oppressed by systems of thought of structures based on ideas of gender, class or racial inequality. Like, her women must have the faith and courage to venture out of the security of the known into the insecurity of the unknown and to carve out, with their own hands, a new world from which the injustices and inequities that separate men from women, class from class, and race from race, have been eliminated.



وأخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب
العالمين

