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African Novels and the Question of Orality

By Eileen Julien

Indiana University Press. Hardback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW PRINT ON DEMAND., African Novels and the Question of Orality, Eileen Julien, Eileen Julien demonstrates that the search for oral origins in African literature is a quest for African authenticity. In a critique and revision of the conceptual category of orality as it has been understood and used by scholars, Julien stresses the transformation of narrative genres as an index of sociopolitical relations and authorial vision. "African Novels and the Question of Orality" posits that the adaptation of oral narrative genres is not a necessary feature of the novel but is, rather, an arbitrary one that expresses an imaginative solution to problems of aesthetic and ideological dimension. Julien argues that authors adapt such genres to serve narrative goals and social and political vision. She selects three generic tendencies: epic, initiation story, and fable as the basis for detailed study of six novels: Hampet B's "L' étrange destin de Wangrin", Ousmane Sembène's "Les Bouts de bois de Dieu", Camara Laye's "Le Regard du roi", Jean-Marie Adiaffi's "La Carte d'identité", Sony Labou Tansi's "La Vie et demie", and Ngugi wa Thiong'o's "Devil on the Cross".



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