



# Meditations on African Literature (Contributions in Afro-American & African Studies)

*Dubem Okafor*

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While African literature is presently enjoying much attention from the scholarly community, its heritage and identity are becoming less clearly defined. While Africa has a rich oral tradition, African writers find themselves writing in the languages of their colonial oppressors. So too, many of the best African writers now live outside Africa, particularly in North America. Much of the criticism of African literature is written by American professors, African writers sometimes teach their literature at American universities, and American publishers issue African literary works. At the same time, the political climate of many African countries has been detrimental to literacy and writing. This book explores many of the issues currently facing African literature.

Each chapter is written by an expert contributor, to provide the volume with a broad coverage of numerous topics related to the present state of African literature. The opening chapters examine issues of language and postcoloniality in African literary works. Later chapters discuss such concerns as the formation of an African literary canon, representations of history and ideology in African writing, the role of women in African literature, and African ritual theater. Through its various chapters, the volume makes clear that African writers continue to engage pressing social and political issues, and that they are intellectuals rather than entertainers.

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