



A Mask Dancing: Nigerian Novelists of the Eighties (New Perspectives on African Literature)

Adewale Maja-Pearce

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Writers such as Festus Iyayi, Ben Okri and Kole Omotoso represent what has come to be known as the second generation of Nigerian novelists. Emerging from the shadow of the 1966-1970 civil war, they were greatly influenced by the ensuing shifts in public and social life, especially the obscene levels of corruption which coincided with the country's second experiment in democracy under President Shagari. Adewale Maja-Pearce argues that the failure is simple and squarely the failure of the Nigerian intelligentsia. Concentrating mainly, but not exclusively, on the novels of the 1980s he traces this failure on the literature itself, which is the touchstone of this deliberately provocative study. 'All the critical twiddle-twaddle about style and form,' as D.H. Lawrence put it, is eschewed in favor of the novels themselves and the extent to which they reveal that intellectual failure.

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