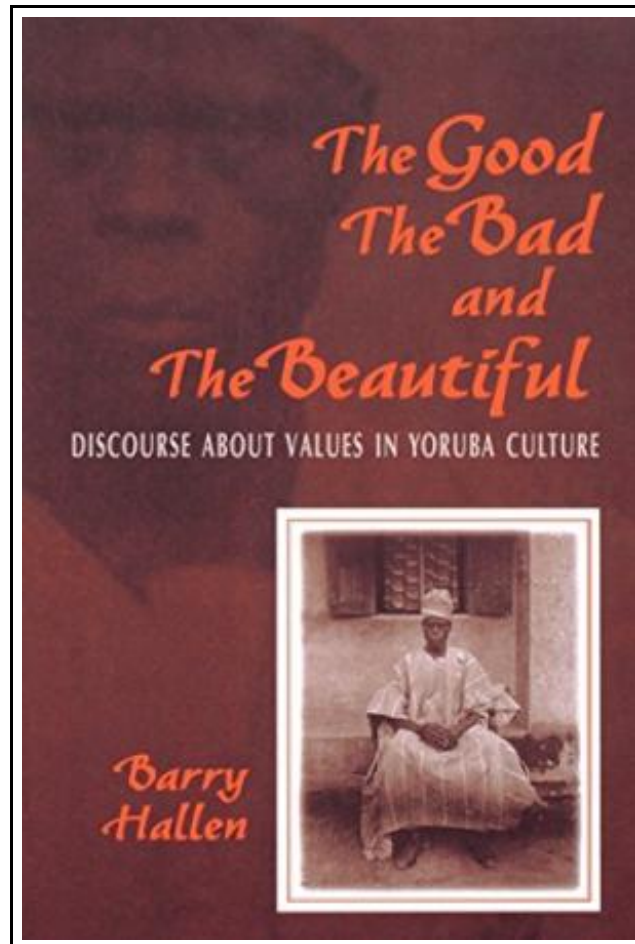


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Indiana University Press. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, **The Good, the Bad, and the Beautiful: Discourse about Values in an African Culture**, B. Hallen, In Yoruba culture, morality and moral values are intimately linked to aesthetics. The purest expression of beauty, at least where human beings are concerned, is to possess a good moral character. But what is the basis on which moral character is judged? How do actions, and especially words, reveal and identify good moral character for a culture that is still significantly based in oral tradition? In this original and intimate look at Yoruba culture, Barry Hallen asks the Yoruba onisegun - the wisest and most accomplished herbalists or traditional healers, individuals justly reputed to be well versed in Yoruba thought and expression - what it means to be beautiful and good. Posed as an outsider wanting to gain an understanding of how to speak Yoruba correctly, Hallen engages the onisegun and has them explain to him the subtleties and intricacies of Yoruba language use and the philosophy behind particular word choices. Through their instructions, they reveal a striking and profound depiction of Yoruba aesthetic and ethical thought. The detailed interpretations of everyday language Hallen supplies provide evidence to challenge prevailing Western views that African thought is nothing more than acquiescence to long-established religious or communal values. The philosophy of ordinary language reveals that moral reflection is indeed individual and evaluation of action and character take place on the basis of clearly and rationally delineated criteria. With the onisegun as his guides, Hallen identifies the priorities of Yoruba philosophy and culture through everyday expression and shows that there are rational pathways to both truth and beauty.



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