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Approaches to Teaching Duras's Ourika

By Mary Ellen Birkett

Modern Language Association of America. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Approaches to Teaching Duras's Ourika, Mary Ellen Birkett, When it was first published, in 1823, Claire de Duras's novel Ourika became a best seller almost immediately, and in recent decades, instructors have found it an irresistible addition to their syllabi. But from a teacher's perspective the novel presents something of a paradox. It is short, its narrative structure is uncomplicated, its vocabulary is limited, its plot is straightforward. It thus lends itself to "simple" readings that fail to reveal the novel's rich fund of social and historical themes. Set against the backdrop of the French and Haitian revolutions, the Terror, and the restoration and featuring the first black woman narrator in French literature, Ourika raises issues of identity, inequality, exclusion, power, and race and gender relations. The goal of this Approaches volume is to help teachers bring out the novel's profound and complex underpinnings and reveal Ourika, its Senegalese protagonist, as a victim of history and a timeless tragic heroine. Part 1 provides an overview of editions of the novel and secondary resources, including critical, historical, and biographical studies. Also featured is a useful time line situating Duras's life...



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