



# **African Spirituality in Black Women's Fiction: Threaded Visions of Memory, Community, Nature and Being**

*Elizabeth J. West*

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*African Spirituality in Black Women's Fiction: Threaded Visions of Memory, Community, Nature and Being* is the nexus to scholarship on manifestations of Africanisms in black art and culture, particularly the scant critical works focusing on African metaphysical retentions. This study examines New World African spirituality as a syncretic dynamic of spiritual retentions and transformations that have played prominently in the literary imagination of black women writers. Beginning with the poetry of Phillis Wheatley, *African Spirituality in Black Women's Fiction* traces applications and transformations of African spirituality in black women's writings that culminate in the conscious and deliberate celebration of Africanity in Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. The journey from Wheatley's veiled remembrances to Hurston's explicit gaze of continental Africa represents the literary journey of black women writers to represent Africa as not only a very real creative resource but also a liberating one. Hurston's icon of black female autonomy and self realization is woven from the thread work of African spiritual principles that date back to early black women's writings.

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