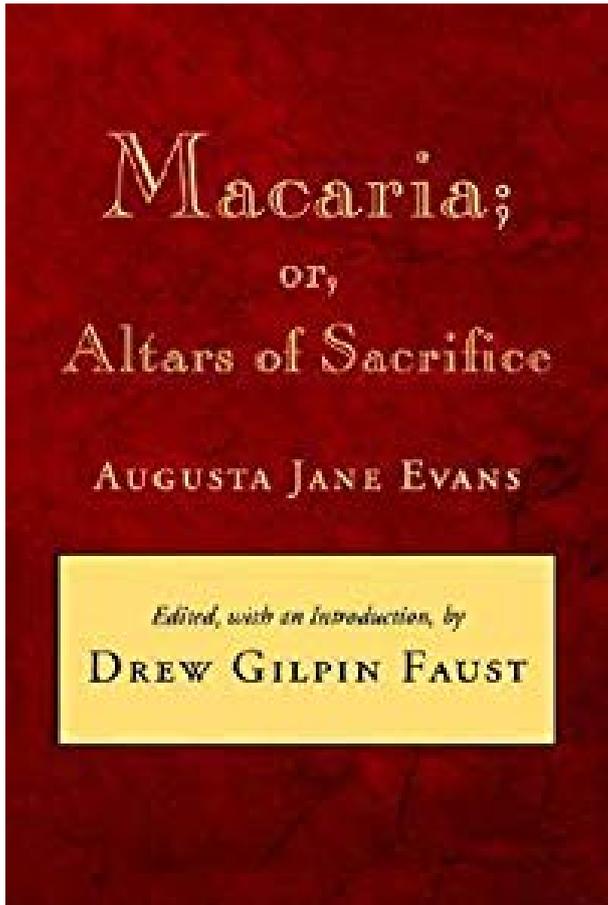


Macaria; or, Altars of Sacrifice



ISBN13:	9780807116623
Genre:	Historical
Published:	August 1st 1992 by LSU Press
Pages:	448
Language	English
ISBN10:	0807116629
Author:	Augusta Jane Evans
Goodreads Rating:	3.59

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First published in 1864, *Macaria; or, Altars of Sacrifice* was the third novel of Augusta Jane Evans, one of the leading women writers of nineteenth-century domestic fiction. A wartime best seller, with more than twenty thousand copies in circulation in the print-starved Confederacy before the war's end, the novel was also extremely well received along the Union front, so much so that some northern officials thought it should be banned. Long out of print and largely unavailable until now, *Macaria* is a compelling narrative about women and war. In *Macaria*, Evans charts the journey of two southern women toward ultimate self-realization through their service in the war-torn Confederacy.

Irene and Electra struggle to assert their independence and gain for themselves a place in southern society apart from their now-disrupted domestic roles. Discarding the traditional theme of romantic fulfillment, Evans skillfully crafts a novel about women compelled by the departure and death of so many southern men to find meaning in their own "single bedness," rather than in marriage. Thus Evans successfully subverts the characteristic form of women's fiction, that of the romance narrative, to create a "quest" narrative, more common in men's fiction. *Macaria* appealed directly and calculatedly to sentiments prevailing within its potential audience of southern women readers - acknowledging their fears of useness and of widowhood or spinsterhood, as well as their attraction to a new language of self-determination.

In her perceptive introduction to this edition, Drew Gilpin Faust places the novel in the context of the concerns of Confederate nationalism and the contributions of women during the Civil War. She shows that Evans, though a staunch supporter of the Confederacy and a wartime hospital volunteer, felt marginal to the war effort and, like many other women, bemoaned this fact in diaries and letters. It is from this aspect, the emergence of the literary woman, that Faust