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PERO PRESS: DATASHEET No. 1

Title: The West and the Rest of Us, (2nd Edition)

Author: Chinweizu

Subject Areas: 1. Arts -- History, African Culture.
2. Social Sciences -- Politics, Economics, Current
Affairs, International Affairs.
3. General, Basic and African Studies.

No. of pages: xxx + 586 = 616 pp.

Brief Description: This is the new edition of a book first published in 1975, which examined what really happened to the rest of the world under Western expansion. This slightly revised and fully updated version integrates the latest in world politics and economic diplomacy.

The work consists of seven parts, each focusing on a particular phase of the long history of European contact and influence with distant lands. Part One explores the assault by the West, from as early as the 15th century, on Africa, Asia and the Americas. Part Two examines and censures slavery, as well as the conquest and colonization of Africa. In Part Three, neo-colonialism is presented as the main source of the underdevelopment pervading all levels of post-independence society in Africa. The role of the African elite in the present Black Condition is critically examined in Part Four. Part Five analyses both European neo-colonialism and the US version of imperialism, and how they exercise domination over the Third World.

Parts Six and Seven are new, and update the story. Part Six presents a detailed analysis of the major coalitions of Third World countries in international affairs, ranging from the Bandung Conference to the campaign for the NIEO. The failure of their diplomatic militancy and economic rebellion is analysed, and vital lessons are drawn from that experience. Part Seven, which serves as epilogue, projects a scenario of civil war in Third World countries, between the Ariels (the local upholders of the West's hegemony) and the Calibans (the radical nationalists). It predicts a Caliban victory, and a rough road ahead toward a new world order.

What Reviewers Said:

This new edition reprints the original text (with a few corrections) and adds three chapters to bring it up to date. It is presented for a non-specialised readership, and written in the lucid tradition of synoptic historiography.

Chinweizu's flowing style, reminiscent of the oratorical journalism of the old West African newspapers, is a pleasure to read. It would make a stimulating textbook for African schools, or for the general African reader who tends to be starved of readable African history books.

- TLS

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The West and the Rest of Us clearly falls within the dependency school of contemporary analysis. It also integrates more explanatory variables in discussing the Third World's predicament. This study will clearly stimulate debate and provide for more academic inquiry. For these reasons it is highly recommended for library collections of African and Third World studies.

-- The African Book Publishing Record

What Reviewers Said of the First Edition:

I found the book fascinating. It combines learning, insight and passion to provide a remarkably enlightening and often deeply moving account of the European assault on Africa. Chinweizu gives a penetrating analysis of the psychological and cultural effects of imperial conquest, alongside of his portrayal of the political and economic consequences. He succeeds most impressively in placing this dramatic account in the context of world history. It is a fine piece of work.

- Noam Chomsky

A far-reaching indictment of contemporary neo-imperialism - particularly of that omnivorous economic predator, the U.S. Lucid and passionate . . . convincing advocacy of economic and political autonomy for Africa.

- Foreign Affairs

Chinweizu puts the matter squarely. He writes with passion, wit and clarity. This book is compulsory reading for the West and the rest of us.

- Chinua Achebe

Data on Edition Exhibited:

Date of Publication: 1987

Price (U.K.): £20

ISBN: 978 2651 01 x

Publisher: Pero Press

PERO PRESS: DATASHEET No. 2

Title: Decolonising the African Mind

Author: Chinweizu

Subject Areas: 1. Social Sciences -- Economics, Politics, Current Affairs.
2. Arts -- History, Literature, Cultural Affairs.
3. General, Basic and African Studies.

No. of pages: x + 294 = 304 pp.

Brief Description: This is a collection of essays (on issues arising from economics, history, politics, culture, literature and current affairs), written between 1980 and 1987, from an Afrocentric standpoint. In this sequel to The West and the Rest of Us, Chinweizu examines the colonial mentality, in its ~~various~~ various cultural manifestations, and how it has obstructed African economic development and cultural renaissance since political decolonization was achieved.

What Reviewers Said:

"This book is timely for the questions and challenges that Chinweizu poses to all the African people."

- Ngugi wa Thiong'o

Africa is in a mess: how to get out of it? Minds are still in thrall: how to set them free? Euro-America still rules the corridors of thought: how to open the doors to Africa's originality? The answers, predictably, have to as broad as the questions.

This book has much that is perceptive as well as provocative, and its central message demands attention.

- Basil Davidson

Chinweizu finds the achievements of independent Africa disappointing. Both the United States and the Soviet Union, he notes, accomplished substantial industrial transformations in roughly thirty years, but African efforts at nation-building and economic development have yielded little in comparison. The problem, Chinweizu believes, is that the colonial mentality still lies like a fog on the African consciousness. Only if the African mind is freed from alien control, he argues, can African creativity be released to create a renovated African culture that is consistent with both its own traditions and the demands of an industrial economy.

- TLS

Data on Edition Exhibited:

Date of Publication: 1987

Price (U.K.): £12.50

ISBN: 978 2651 02 8

Publisher: Pero Press

PERO PRESS; DATASHEET No. 3

Title: Invocations and Admonitions

Author: Chinweizu

Subject Areas: 1. Arts -- Literature.
2. General, Basic and African Studies.

No. of pages: 84 pp.

Brief Description: This is a collection of 50 poems and parables, many of them satirical, which won the ANA Poetry Prize for 1985. It includes poems on Black African history, African and non-African religions, law and order, farmers and traders, rivalry, fame, health, colonization, volcanic eruptions, women, sex, and laments for dead heroes. The poems range in form from short epigrams (like the two-line "Colonizer's Logic") to the 20-page "Admonition to the Black World" which, in five dramatic movements, journeys through 5,000 years of African history and "informs, suggests, admonishes, satirizes and arouses gentle laughter from the reader".

What Reviewers Said:

Winner of the 1985 ANA (Association of Nigerian Authors) Poetry Prize.

"The themes are highly relevant to Nigeria and Africa; the poems are full of imagery of the right kind; there is very high competence in the manipulation of language for effect; these factors combine well to produce a very powerful effect."

- Prof. Emmanuel Obiechina, Chairman of the ANA Awards Committee.

The author shows an excellent command of language use while covering a wide variety of topics.

Among the topics are black Africa, traditional religious beliefs, law and order, farmers and traders, rivalry, fame, health, colonisation, volcanic eruption, women, sex, lament and religion.

The longest poem in the volume is "Admonition to the Black World".

It is similar in tone to the shortest poem, "Colonizer's Logic", a two-line poem: "These natives are unintelligent - We can't understand their language".

This volume is good reading. It is highly recommended for all segments of society.
- The African Book Publishing Record

The author draws from images and symbols that are either African or fall largely within the imaginative reach of the African audience that he primarily addresses. This feature of accessibility and a culturally defined constituency are, content apart, the biggest strengths of the collection.

The longest poem in the collection, "Admonition to the Black Race", is done in a fast chanting style that condenses thousands of years of black Egyptian history into five dramatic movements.

An enactment of that poem might bring out its full force and African school children long brought out on 'Hiawatha' and the 'Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner' could benefit by adding this poem to their itinerary.

- Africa Events

Data on Edition Exhibited:

Date of Publication: 1986

Price (U.K.): £5

ISBN: 978 2358 87 8

Publisher: Pero Press

Title: Voices from Twentieth-Century Africa

Author: Chinweizu

Subject Areas: 1. Arts -- Literature.
2. General, Basic and African Studies.

No. of pages: xl + 424 = 464 pp.

Brief Description: This anthology redraws the map of African literature in an even-handed treatment of its traditions: the popular and the academic, the oral and the written, the folk and the elite; and we find both literature translated from indigenous African languages (roughly half of the 186 items), and literature composed in the languages of Africa's alien conquerors. There are short stories, extracts from novels and epics, fables, parables, songs, satires, dirges, boasts, laments, and epigrams. As to subject, it takes in all the diverse facets of African life: love, hate, war, affairs of state; Africa's flora and fauna; religion, death, birth, marriage; and natural disasters: flood, famine, drought. Together these pieces make a compelling and evocative picture of African life in the twentieth century.

What Reviewers Said:

Voices from Twentieth-Century Africa is a polemical anthology. . . . It aims to map out by example the true dimensions of the field of African literature and so change the official view of "what African literature is". It breaks with the deplorable habit of bracketing oral literature into a kind of introductory ghetto which serves as "background" to the "emergence" or "development" of what is felt to be the real (written, modernist) literature of Africa. Instead, this collection is arranged thematically, and oral poetry and narrative are placed side by side with written texts throughout, constituting about half of all the pieces included and demonstrating a wonderful range of expressive registers. The written texts are drawn from both well-known and relatively little-known sources; they include both complete poems and excerpts from longer works.

Chinweizu's redefinition of "what African literature is" is persuasive. There is not a single entry in the anthology that is not a pleasure to read: some are surprising, some moving and some hilarious.

It is fitting that the book should end with an oral text on "Life's Variety", for the anthology triumphantly demonstrates the richness of the literary field it seeks to exemplify.

- TLS

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This collection is to be greatly welcomed for the songs, parables, proverbs, elegies, epigrams and snatches of epics, meticulously collected from over two dozen countries and beautifully translated into English. If the nature of African suffering is movingly represented in the anthology, then so is the comedy of domestic relations, the mischief of forbidden desire, the celebration of illicit sex, extravagant praise for one's own prowess, hymns to the joys of alcohol, wonder at the birth of children, songs of planting or harvesting of crops, and altogether a sheer gratitude for being alive.

-- The Guardian (London)

What Chinweizu has done in this ground-breaking anthology is to retrieve the rich harvest of African oral literature -- fables, songs, myths and epics -- for long left out in the cold, and to welcome them into the main room of African literature. One was struck by how much of Africa's literary heritage is usually banished from the pages of conventional anthologies. Preserving this literature, which otherwise would be an endangered species in an Africa that is slipping out of the oral tradition, is the major achievement of this excellent anthology.

Against the backdrop of what Chinweizu states -- that the anchoring of African humanities instruction in the literary tradition of Europe, rather than of Africa, amounts to a "scandal" -- this anthology is a welcome retreat from the path of that scandal.

-- African Commentary (USA)

Chinweizu has given us an abundance of true African literature in Voices from Twentieth-Century Africa which only leaves the reader crying out for more.

-- West Africa (London)

Demonstrates triumphantly that African literature is capacious, liberating and powerful.

-- The Observer (London)

Data on Edition Exhibited:

Date of Publication: 1988

Price (U.K.): £6.95

ISBN: 0-571-14930-8

Publisher: Faber and Faber*

*Negotiations with Faber and Faber are now at the final stages for Pero Press to publish this book in Nigeria.

Title: Toward the Decolonization of African Literature

Authors: Chinweizu, Onwuchekwa Jemie, Ihechukwu Madubuike.

Subject Areas: 1. Arts -- Literature, Literary History.
2. General, Basic and African Studies.

No. of pages: xx + 320 = 340 pp.

Brief Description: This volume is a stinging critique of some of the dominant trends in contemporary African literature and literary criticism. The authors present their own views on African literature and on the African writer's responsibility to African society. Due consideration is given to those European and African traditions of orature, literature and cosmography that are the foundations of contemporary African literature. The authors concretize their critique by highlighting the aims and techniques of such Pan-African masters as Achebe, Senghor, Tutuola, Sembane, p'Bitek, Mazisi Kunene, Rene Maran, Langston Hughes and Ngugi wa Thiong'o; and they underline these techniques and aims as the proper foundations for African literature.

What Reviewers Said:

If there is one book I would make compulsory reading for all scholars and students in the field of African literature, this is it. I would urge all who seek to understand the African continent and its literature to read it with *care*.

-- Prof. Dennis Brutus,
in Pan-African Book World

Toward the Decolonization of African Literature articulates a point of view which is increasingly heard among African critics; it is good to see it written down in a manner that successfully combines academic evidence with a populist tone. Also, the book is fundamentally right. This is the most vital work on African literature to appear in years.

-- TLS

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Date of publication: 1980
Price (U.K.): £12.50
ISBN: 978 156 100 9
Publisher: Fourth Dimension*

* Fourth Dimension has relinquished all rights in this title and returned them to the authors, who have assigned the rights to Pero Press. See the two letters attached.