



The Centre for Critical Thinking and Resourceful Research in Africa (CECTRRA)

Call for Abstracts/Panel Proposals

*The Centre for Critical Thinking and Resourceful Research in Africa
(CECTRRA)*

Announces

The first Outstanding African Thinkers Conference on Chinweizu

Theme:

Chinweizu, Africa and the Rest of the World

Venue: Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Accra.

Date: November 4–7, 2018

Almost in a manner reminiscent of perfect commitment to the pursuit of knowledge and truth by such ageless intellectuals like the Ethiopian Zera Yacob, the Greek Socrates and German Immanuel Kant, the Nigerian intellectual Chinweizu demonstrates before our very eyes that a life of total commitment to knowledge and scholarship and devoid of other entanglements is possible in Africa. This total devotion to knowledge and thinking has paid handsomely and, for the past 40 years after his emergence on the intellectual scene at the world level with his famous book *The West and the Rest of Us* (1975), Chinweizu has turned out many outstanding, thought-provoking works that will, no doubt, command a more detailed discussion at a conference. Apart from *The West and the Rest of Us* (1975), Chinweizu has published a sizeable number of works that demand a scholarly forum such as can be afforded by a conference to debate and critique his works in a manner that will enrich the intellectual history of black Africa. These works include *Invocations and Admonitions* (1986); *Towards the Decolonisation of African Literature* (1983–Co-authored); *Decolonising the African Mind* (1987); *Energy Crisis and other poems* (1978); *Voices from Twentieth-century Africa* (1988); *Anatomy of Female Power: A Masculinist Dissection of Matriarchy* (1990). In addition to these works are scores of articles, book chapters and essays on education, pan-Africanism, endogenous knowledge, Nigerian nationalism, etc., and several others that discuss the state as well as the future of the black world scattered across reputable journals and the print media.

This multidisciplinary conference sets out to critique, problematize as well as justify some of his claims on and about Africa in a manner that will reveal the weight and worth of his writings and provide a platform for other emergent thinkers on the African intellectual scene. It will create space for scholars from a wide range of disciplines—African Studies, Philosophy, History, English

Language and Literary Studies, Economics, Political Science, Gender Studies, and Cultural Studies, etc, to address the works of Chinweizu.

The conference will address a number of questions under a number of themes including the following:

(i) Chinweizu, the West and the Rest of Us:

- What are the myths, masks and masquerades that have defined and directed the relationship between the West and Africa and what role have the works and writings of Chinweizu played to highlight these?

- How is the European and African other constructed and constituted; what role has Chinweizu played in interpreting these binary locations and how can this knowledge be applied to constitute a better future?

(ii) Chinweizu, Decolonisation and De-Westernization

- What are the demands of decolonisation on Africa and what are the imperatives for these on African concepts, ideas, ideals, values, institutions and state formations? Should decolonisation in Africa take the forms of such projects in other former colonies or the world or are there peculiar African demands for the project? How have the works of Chinweizu addressed this?

- Which paradigm for knowledge and development is possible and desirable in African context – in Art, sciences, the humanities, politics and economics and how do the works of Chinweizu address these?

(iii) Chinweizu and the Question/Challenge of African Arts

- In the arts and humanities, how do the writings of Chinweizu question and direct African intellectual traditions and how, for instance, does his idea of literature sometimes referred to in literary circles as “Chinwature” add to constitute a relevant voice in the effort to conceptualise an African theory of arts and literature?

- What is the state of the language question in African Literature and how do the works of Chinweizu motivate or respond to this?

- What are the challenges affecting African Philosophical Enquiry and how has African Philosophy animated African arts and humanities? Do the writings of Chinweizu suggest anything on this?

- What are the Challenges of Scientific Rationality in Africa and how do the works of Chinweizu address this?

(iv) Chinweizu, the Past and the Challenge of African Modernity

- Assuming that all these charges that Africa heaps on the West are true, what proposals do Africanist scholars make for a more equitable world other?

- Which thoughts for an African future are desirable from the past and how do the works of Chinweizu suggest this?

- What role can be assigned to pan-Africanism in the effort to achieve a post-colonial African future and what is the position of Chinweizu on this?

(v) Chinweizu and the Gender Question in Africa and Beyond

- How do the works of Chinweizu intervene in the Gender Question and - What contributions do Chinweizu's works make to Gender/Women's studies in Africa?

(vi) Westernization, Arabization and (Re)Africanization of Africa

-How do we make sense of the unequal relationship between Africa and the rest of the world as made evident by the twin contesting forces of Westernization and Arabization on the African continent?

-Where is black/sub-Saharan African civilization and how can the values of this civilization defend and re-define African Humanity? Do African endogenous religious beliefs have any role in contemporary Africa? How have the works of Chinweizu addressed this question?

-Is it desirable to have an African superpower through arms and ammunition as a counter force to the forces of recolonization, and does the African worldview support this?

(vii) Chinweizu, the Intellectual and the African Public Sphere

- What do the works of Chinweizu communicate about and for Africa in the global public sphere?

- How do Chinweizu's works engage with Africa's place in global media and what political communication issues could be drawn in this regard?

-Which paradigm for knowledge and development is possible and desirable in the African context in the arts, sciences, the humanities, politics and economics, and how do the works of Chinweizu address these?

(viii) Chinweizu, Race, Reason and Human Nature

- Do reason and knowledge have colour? If so, which colour?

- How racial or even geographical can truth and knowledge be, and how does the effort of Chinweizu all these years serve to bring these aspects of knowledge to the fore?

-Which aspect of Human nature suggests/generates/regenerates racism and which theory of Human nature does it defend?

-Is Human nature influenced by environment and geography/Culture? How does the works of Chinweizu address this?

- Panel proposals are also desired on any of the works of Chinweizu, such as *The West and the Rest of Us* (1975); *Towards the Decolonisation of African Literature* (1983—co-authored); *Decolonising the African Mind* (1987); *Anatomy of Female Power: A Masculinist Dissection of Matriarchy* (1990).

Abstracts and panellists can also go beyond these suggested themes to address other issues that dominate African/Africanist scholarship such as African Political Economy, Development Discourse in Africa, the Challenges of State Formation, Globalization and Glocalization, etc

Abstracts/panel proposals of not more than 250 words should be sent to any of the following email address on or before May 30, 2018 oaconference@gmail.com; Notification for Approval of Abstracts and panels will be sent on or before June 30, 2018. Abstract Submissions should indicate the sub-themes under which the abstracts should be considered and Panel proposers are encouraged to forward along names of intending panellists. Arrangements are on with a number of Publishers for publication of the papers including the **Africa World Press,USA** which has accepted to publish papers presented at the conference.

Confirmed Participants:

Professor Maduka Durunze–University of Abuja
Professor Damian Opata–University of Nigeria, Nsukka
Professor Peter Fosl–Connecticut State University, USA
Professor Chielozona Eze–Northeastern Illinois University, USA
Dr. Obadele Kambon–University of Ghana, Legon
Dr. Sharon Omotoso–University of Ibadan
Dr. Lyod Amoah–University of Ghana
Dr. Chris Allsobrook–Centre for Leadership Ethics, University of Fort Hare, South Africa
Dr. Eugene Ugwu–University of Nigeria, Nsukka
Dr. Joseph Ogbonnaya–Marquette University, USA
Dr. Henry Ukavwe–Head of General Studies, Plateau State University, Bokkos.
Dr. Nonye Mbah–University of Abuja
Dr. Richard Iroanya–Thabo Mbeki Leadership Institute, University of South Africa
Dr. Benson Igboin–Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko
Dr. Marcel Onyibor–FUTA Akure/Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria
Dr. Chike Okoye–Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka

Convener: Professor Lawrence Ogbo Ugwuanyi–CESTRRA (www.cectraafrica.org)