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**From the Selected Works of Chukwuma Azuonye**

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2002

## "Preface," The Hero in Igbo Life and Literature

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# **THE HERO IN IGBO LIFE AND LITERATURE**

**EDITED BY  
DONATUS NWOGA  
AND  
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## Preface

This book is the outcome of a project on the problem of identifying and defining the hero in Igbo life and literature, initiated by co-editor, Donatus Nwoga. From a private book project, the idea was developed by co-editor, Chukwuma Azuonye, then Chairman of the Arts Faculty Public Lecture and Seminar Committee, into the subject of the 1st Annual Seminar on Igbo Life and Culture held at the Institute of African Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, from May 15 to 17, 1986. The book comprises a selection of twenty-seven papers most of which were originally presented at that seminar. In the papers presented in this book, an attempt has been made to tackle this problem from various disciplinary perspectives. The papers have been contributed by leading Igbo Scholars in the humanities, especially literature, and represent documentation of great significance touching on issues that are crucial to the understanding of the Igbo psyche and the problems of Igbo survival as a people in a modern, multinational, socio-political environment.

The compilation of this book has been made possible by the enthusiasm, commitment and hard work of all those whose works are presented here and it is our pleasant duty to acknowledge these contributions. We are particularly grateful to the original caucus of scholars, whose private brain-storming meetings over drinks in the house of professor Donatus Nwoga in 1983/84 through 1985/86 opened up the various dimensions of the topic. In addition to the editors, the caucus includes Iheanachor Egonu, Obiora Udechukwu, J.N. Oriji, Emeka Nwabueze, Obi Maduakor, Ezi-Nwanyi Patricia Nwoga, Chimalum Nwankwo and Nnadozie Inyama.

Thanks are also due to the Public Lectures and Seminars Committee of the Faculty of Arts, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, for providing the forum for the 1st Annual Seminar on Igbo Life and Culture at which the papers were first presented and discussed. The Seminar helped to speed up the pace of the writing of the papers, introduced new vistas to the project and stimulated important modifications on the goals of the project as a whole and on the content and structure of various individual contributions.

One of the papers presented here (Chapter 25) comes from a published source (*Uwa Ndi Igbo*, No.1 June 1984). For permission to reproduce this text of one of the monumental Anambra Igbo romantic epics, we are grateful to the publisher of *Uwa Ndi Igbo* and Director of the Okike Arts Center, Professor Chinua Achebe and the editor/translators. Two other papers (Chapters 24 and 26) are



edited versions of papers originally presented in the Department of English, University of Ibadan, for the Folklore and Folklife research project, under the direction of Professor Isidore Okpewho. We are grateful to the Department, the supervisor and the authors (Paul Akanazu (Chapter 24) and Michael Ezinando (Chapter 26)) for permission to reproduce these important texts here.

Our thanks also go to Helen Chukwuma, who, with co-editors, Chukwuma Azuonye, promptly responded to our invitation to contribute special papers (Chapters 23 and 27) which, respectively, offer alternative perspectives or make up for gaps not covered by the papers presented at the 1986 seminar.

These acknowledgments will not be complete without mentioning the zeal and energy displayed by Mr. Iroha Udeh, Professor Nwoga's research assistant. He acted as a vital link-person between the co-editors and between the authors and the editors and in this way ensured that papers were submitted, collated, edited and revised according to schedule. His efforts have been most valuable in minimizing delays.

Finally, our thanks go to Mrs. Cecilia Chinyere and Mr. Uche Nwoga who carefully went through all the edited typescripts and committed them into the word processor, a process which has been highly useful in eliminating errors and in determining the optimum outlay of the chapters.

*Donatus Ibe Nwoga*  
*and*  
*Chukwuma Azuonye*