



The Penguin Book of Modern African Poetry

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This anthology of African poetry has been expanded to include 99 poets from 27 countries. The content of the poetry is wide-ranging, including war songs, political protests and poems about human love, African nature and the surprises that life offers.

The Penguin Book of Modern African Poetry Details

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From Reader Review The Penguin Book of Modern African Poetry for online ebook

Louis says

This really was a powerful book. There are many beautiful and wonderful poems, but what really adds to it is the way that the book introduces Africa. I have never been to Africa, though I have long wanted to go. Although I have studied some about Africa, learning about it through poetry gives a very different sense. This volume really seems to hold much of the tragedy and trauma of Africa in a very personal way. I felt closer to Africa after reading this. Although the book is a book of poems, it is also more than that. The poems serve as a beautiful introduction to aspects of Africa that could be missed through more narrative and historical overviews.

Farah says

Beautiful verses.. And nicely edited.

Samir Rawas Sarayji says

I love this anthology. Anyone interested in African literature or postcolonial poetry is bound to find a dozen handful of poems that resonate. The collection covers the entire continent shedding a voice from tiny Mauritius to giant Algeria, and from the most populous Nigeria to the sparsely populated Sao Tome. Beauty, injustice, slavery, corruption, dictatorship, rivalry, segregation, inequality, poverty, disease, nature... it is a collection to read and reread.

anca says

It's a big responsibility to say about certain books that they are life changing, but all the rage, love and pain collected in these African verses have to leave a mark on you, regardless of how cold-hearted you might be.

Gokul Alex says

A list of poems, stemming from a collective dialectic of imagination, both politically conscious and unconscious!

James F says

This review is of the fourth (1998) edition. The book contains a selection of short poems (most half a page to

two pages each) by 99 poets from 27 countries in Africa, written in the last sixty years of the twentieth century. Some were written originally in English and some were translated from other European or African languages. The poems are arranged alphabetically by country, from Angola to Zimbabwe; the largest section is from Nigeria. There were three poets I had read something by previously (Senghor, Soyinka, Mapanje) and a few others I had heard of, but most were new to me; in an anthology this varied there is bound to be a certain unevenness, but I was surprised by how many of these authors I enjoyed. The style ranged from traditional to very modern, from straightforward to obscure; the influence of Senghor was obvious in much of the poetry translated from French. There is a later edition (2008).

Kyriakos Sorokkou says

Ας μην κοροΐδευμαστε, εδ? και 10 μ?ρες I'm **not** currently reading it. Δι?βασα περ?που το 1/3 κατ? τη δι?ρκεια του Αυγο?στου στον Μαραθ?νιο αφρικανικο? βιβλ?ου, αλλ? τ?ρα δεν ε?μαι σε African mood, του χρ?νου. Β?ζω μια εκτεν? ?νω τελε?α εδ? και του χρ?νου συνεχ?ζω. ?μεινα στην Νιγηρ?α. Βαθμολογ?α το 2017.

J.M. Hushour says

This collection strikes a nice balance between traditional, culture-heavy poetry which wouldn't turn any heads and some pretty outlandish and outstanding surreal and vanguard selections. Thematically, it tends towards the grim, which can't be surprising since Africa has been a wealth of post-colonial fuckups and shenanigans since the 1960s, thus a lot of the poems reflect rape, genocide, murder, killing, war, and so on. Now, don't get me wrong, there are plenty that aren't, so, don't be deterred. Excellent editing with some brief bios in the back.

Megan says

It's a great collection, but it would be nice if the years for each of the poems were included on the page with the poems. The biography of Ben Okri is also missing from the authors' biographies at the end.

Melissa says

A birthday gift from my son, who spent part of this summer in Africa.

Aidan Cowell says

This collection is indescribable. Particularly because the poems are so well written and are so diverse in the range of topics that within this collection we aren't just reading poems. We are hearing the many voices of the many countries of Africa speak through words in a fluid, honey-like language. Within these words, we hear the emotions of humanity expressed and executed with grace, technicality, but above all, passion.

Perhaps it was the beauty of the language or the emotions it represented that made me dart through the pages and finish it right on Christmas Day when I received it.

The Africans truly don't get enough credit for their talent. While the world may focus on the bad news surrounding the continent (Rwandan genocide, HIV/AIDS epidemic, Ebola outbreak, poverty, etc.), they need to look deeper and discover the immense talents that are possessed by the African people and what they've done for our world.

Aloysius Lionel says

The fastidiousness of the poets in this collection, as well as the urgency of their lyrical voices, has surely resonated in the African nations' unending quest for spiritual depth and tranquility. Included in this book were the interesting, intriguing and uncompromising verses by poets who have always deserved intercontinental readership. Christopher Okigbo (Nigeria), David Diop (Senegal), Kofi Awoonor (Ghana) and Jack Mapanje (Malawi) are some of the African poets whom I adored for their works which spoke of transcendence and of man's perpetual discourse with nature and with the painful past, the prejudicial present and the puzzling future. How they have always loved light to remedy the daunting darkness of history and politics, and how they have always lingered to listen for sounds of hope and celebration whenever dryness and silence penetrate their identity --- these are the operative themes of the poems in this collection, poems that captured the essence of antiquity, with the rhythm of the contemporary. Here is an excerpt from "The Seed in Me" by José Craveiriña (Mozambique) :

And one day
will come all the Marias of the distant nations
penitent or no
weeping
laughing
or loving to the rhythm of a song
To say to my bones
forgive us, brother.

Helena Corder says

I wish Merwin would translate more African poets.

Grazyna Nawrocka says

My expectations of vivid colors, lively content and rhythmic verses were not met. Instead I found most of this poetry to be grim. Overwhelming existence of loss, exile, torture, death and unjust imprisonment causes this anthology to be hard to read, but reflects reality of living in Africa. There were some funny verses, but not very many. Strangely, most of the poems gave impression as if they were native to the European cultures. Africa has not found its voice yet. I liked the most poems from Nigeria.

Mikael says

second hand copy too icky
