



Houseboy

By Ferdinand Oyono

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Houseboy By Ferdinand Oyono

Toundi Ondoua, the rural African protagonist of *Houseboy*, encounters a world of prisms that cast beautiful but unobtainable glimmers, especially for a black youth in colonial Cameroon. *Houseboy*, written in the form of Toundi's captivating diary and translated from the original French, discloses his awe of the white world and a web of unpredictable experiences. Early on, he escapes his father's angry blows by seeking asylum with his benefactor, the local European priest who meets an untimely death. Toundi then becomes "the Chief European's 'boy'--the dog of the King." Toundi's attempt to fulfill a dream of advancement and improvement opens his eyes to troubling realities. Gradually, preconceptions of the Europeans come crashing down on him as he struggles with his identity, his place in society, and the changing culture.

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Editorial Review

Review

"... Mr. Oyono's sophisticated wit stings like a mosquito and he underwrites his story with real craftsmanship." --Eve Burgess, *Punch*

"The darkly satirical work skewers French colonial Cameroonian society. It is an essential, accessible text for African literature and postcolonial literature courses." --Felicity Palmer, Clarkson University

"I'm pleased to see that Waveland is keeping this title in print. *Houseboy* provides students with a vivid portrayal of the underside of colonialism, tragic to be sure, but also sparkling with moments of wit." --Robert Daniels, University of North Carolina

About the Author

Ferdinand Oyono was born in 1929 in Cameroon, and educated there and in France. During his student days in Paris he was prompted to write his first two novels, *Une Vie de Boy* and *Le Vieux Nègre et la Médaille*, both published in 1956, and he was also active and successful on the stage and on television. On his return to Yaoundé and after the independence of Cameroon in 1960, he joined the Diplomatic Service. He has since represented his country at the European Common Market and has been ambassador to Liberia, France, and the United States as well as Director General of UNICEF at the United Nations headquarters in New York. Since the publication of his first two novels, Ferdinand Oyono published *Chemin d'Europe* in 1960, and all his work has been widely translated from French.

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