**Song of Lawino**

***Song of Lawino*** is an [epic poem](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epic_poem) written by [Ugandan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uganda) poet [Okot p'Bitek](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Okot_p%27Bitek). First published in 1966 in [Luo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luo_languages) it was quickly [translated](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Translation) into other languages, including [English](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_language). *Song of Lawino* has become one of the most widely read literary works originating from [Sub-Saharan Africa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sub-Saharan_Africa), and has also become a cultural icon in [Africa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Africa) itself, because of its scathing display of how African society was being destroyed by the [colonization of Africa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colonization_of_Africa)

*Song of Lawino* was originally written in [rhyming](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhyme) [couplets](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Couplet) and had a regular [meter](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meter_%28poetry%29). The poem is told from the [point of view](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Point_of_view_%28literature%29) of Lawino herself in the [1st Person](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grammatical_person).

**Plot**

*Song of Lawino*, which is a [narrative poem](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narrative_poetry), describes how Lawino's husband, Ocol, who is the son of the tribal leader of their specific [Acoli tribe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acholi), has taken a new wife, Clementine. Although Ocol's [polygamy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polygamy) is accepted by society, and by Lawino herself, it is apparent from his actions (as described by Lawino) that he is shunning her in favor of his new wife. Ocol is also said to have a fascination with the culture of the white colonialists, as does Clementine. As an example of this, Lawino says Ocol no longer engages, or has any interest in, the ritualistic [African dance](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_dance) but prefer the [ballroom style dances](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ballroom_dance) introduced by the colonising Europeans. This loss of culture on the part of Ocol is what disturbs Lawino the most. The poem is an extended appeal from Lawino to Ocol to stay true to his own customs, and to abandon his desire to be white.The book also castigates the treatment of christianity by pagans and advocates for the african culture which has been lost by the educated elite.Lawino bemourns her husband's lack of african pride and she goes on to romanticize about all that is black.This is illustrated widely in the text as the african woman Lawino appreciates the fact that "all that is black is beautiful."However it should be noted with great concern that Ocol becomes sentimental about the african culture alone and paints the western culture with a black brush.

Okot p’Bitek’s poem Song of Lawino was written in 1969 about a woman whose husband abandons her for Western ways. The poem was originally written in Okot p’Bitek’s native language of Acholi but has been published in English in several volumes most of which are out of print now. It can also be found in the textbook The Bedford Anthology of World Literature Book 6.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Song\_of\_Lawino