

REPARATIONS AND A NEW GLOBAL ORDER: A COMPARATIVE OVERVIEW

by Chinweizu

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Contemplating the condition of the Black World is vexatious to the spirit: that is probably the strongest impetus which has brought us all here today.

For many centuries, and especially in the last five, the black skin has been a badge of contempt. For instance, it used to be said in Brazil that if you are white and running down the street, you are an athlete; but if you are black and running down the street, you are a thief! And in most parts of the world today, if you

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doors fly open as you approach; but if you are black and rich, you are under suspicion, and handcuuffs and guard dogs stand ready to take you away.

A PAPER PRESENTED

Yes, the black skin is a badge of contempt in the world today, as it has been for nearly 2,000 years. To make sure it does not remain so in the 21st century is perhaps the overall purpose of our search for reparations.

BY

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We are gathered here today, thinkers and activists who want to change Black People's condition in the world. What things do we need to change, both in the world and in ourselves, if we are to accomplish the mission of reparations? What changes must we make in structures, in psychology, in historical consciousness and much else?

We might begin by noting that Blacks are not the only people in the world who are seeking, or who have sought, reparations. In fact, by only now pressing our claim for reparations, we are latecomers to a varied company of peoples in the Americas, in Asia, and in Europe. Here is a partial catalogue of reparations, paid and pending, which are 20th century precedents for reparations to the Black World.