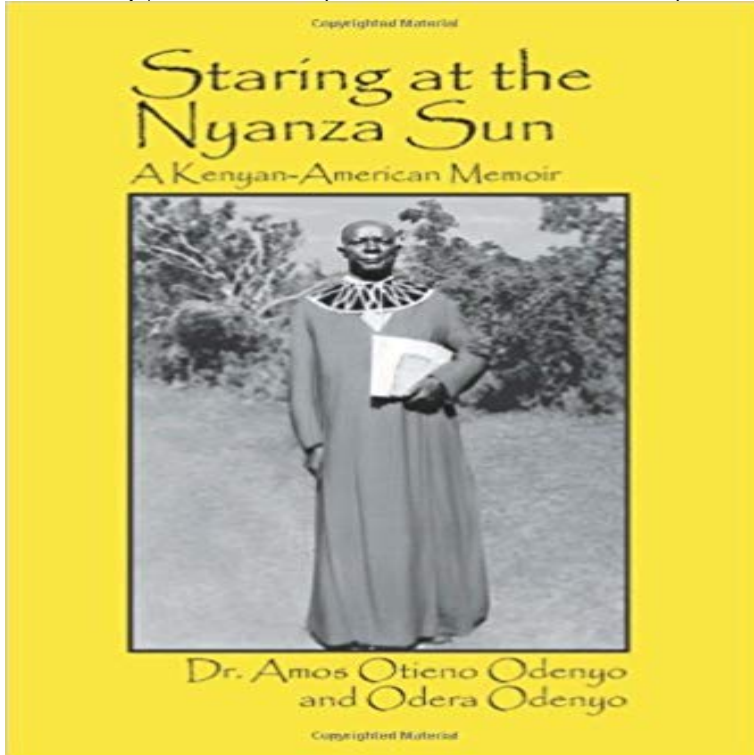


Staring at the Nyanza Sun: A Kenyan-American Memoir



This is a historical memoir of a fathers coming to America, and a sons return to his African roots. It begins in colonial Kenya, when at age seven, Otieno is forced to lie on his back and stare at the equatorial sun. Only the ancient herbs of the forest are able to preserve his sight. At age fourteen he endures the painful adult-initiation ceremony required by the traditions of his Luo community in Gem, Nyanza Province. Now considered a man, Otieno is required to leave his fathers house and build his own. Barefoot, poor, and living in his earth and grass simba, Otieno is rich with personal ambition and the priceless inspiration of the village elders. After graduating from Kisii High School, Otieno becomes one of Kenyas first African police inspectors. However, his desire for higher education propels him to join the 1961 Kennedy Airlift and start a new life in South Dakota, U.S.A. It is the height of the civil rights era in America, and Otienos personal struggle has only just begun. Otienos American-born son, Odera, grew up listening to his father tell inspirational stories of Nyanza. Odera heard tales of the Luo migration from Uganda into Kenya, the rise and fall of the great Luo warrior (Luanda Magere), the legacy of Chief Odera Akango of Gem, and the contributions of pre-independence leaders from Nyanza. However, of all these great stories of Nyanza, which are documented in this ground-breaking memoir, it was the story of his own father that most inspired Odera. Dr. Amos Otieno Odenyo was the first Kenyan to obtain a Ph.D. (Sociology) from the University of Minnesota. He was the Chairman of Social Sciences for York College (City University of New York) for the majority of his career (1970-2007). Dr. Odenyo also served on the Board of Trustees for World Education (Boston), and tirelessly supported the educational ambitions of his extended family in Nyanza, Kenya. His son, Odera Odenyo,

has traveled extensively throughout Eastern Africa, and in 1996 obtained a Masters of Arts in International Relations from American University in Washington D.C. For additional information, visit the authors personal website at www.nyanzasun.com.

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