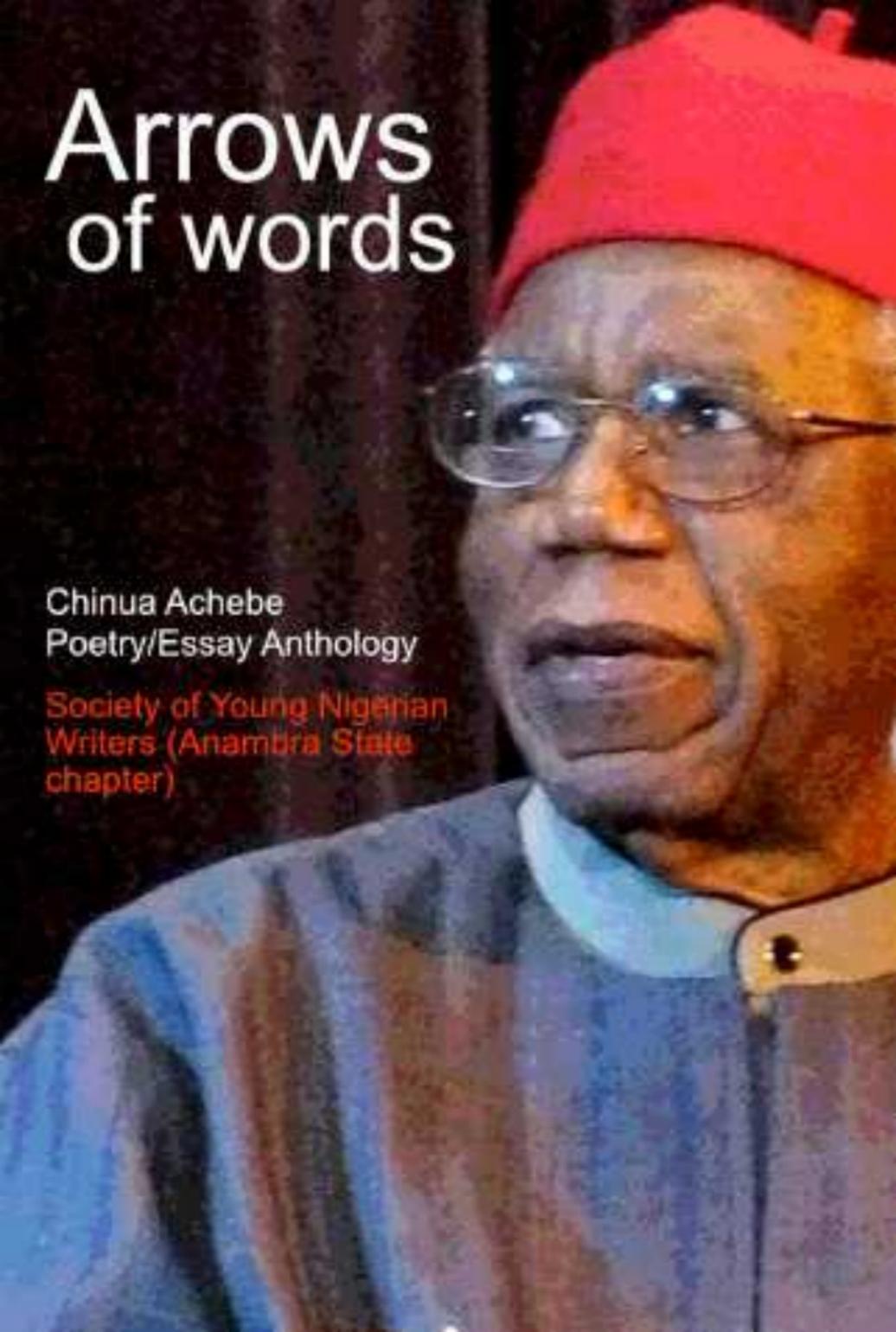


# Arrows of words

A close-up portrait of Chinua Achebe, an elderly man with glasses, wearing a red traditional cap and a blue patterned garment. He is looking slightly to the left of the camera with a thoughtful expression.

Chinua Achebe  
Poetry/Essay Anthology

Society of Young Nigerian  
Writers (Anambra State  
chapter)



# **ARROWS OF WORDS**

## **CHINUA ACHEBE POETRY/ESSAY ANTHOLOGY**

**A PUBLICATION OF SOCIETY OF YOUNG  
NIGERIAN WRITERS  
(ANAMBRA STATE CHAPTER)**





**Arrows of Words**

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Society of Young Nigerian Writers

(Anambra State Chapter)

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**DEDICATION:**

**To**

**CHINUA ACHEBE**

*(16<sup>TH</sup> November, 1930 – 21<sup>ST</sup> March 2013)*



### **Editor's Note**

It has been an interesting journey indeed over the years, to the **Chinua Achebe Poetry/Essay Anthology**. The anthology is a publication of the **Society of Young Nigerian Writers** (Anambra State Chapter) in honour of a foremost Nigerian literary crackerjack, **Late Prof. Chinua Achebe**.

This initiative was born out of need to periodically honour the literary legend with a publication, so as to keep his memory ever green in the literary field of life. It was initiated in 2016 as we planned to host the first edition our literary festival known as the **Chinua Achebe Literary Festival**, which is the first of its kind held anywhere in any part of the world, in honour of the literary legend. Through the anthology, we immortalize Achebe who since his demise on 21st March 2013, has not received any such an honour from any individual or group in any part of the world. Yes; we immortalize him with words.

Every year, prior to hosting this literary festival, we usually open '**Call For Submission In Honour of Achebe**' through which writers from different parts of the world write and send in their poems, essays or reviews (strictly written in honour of Achebe). Those hundreds of entries are the things we collate, screen, vet, and publish as an anthology, which we usually unveil on the day of the festival.

We did this in 2016, 2017 and 2018 editions of the event; but in preparation for the 2019 edition of the event, we decided not to call for submissions for a fresh anthology, but to collate the three previously published collections and publish them as a single anthology, still in honour of Achebe. This was also in keeping of my word during an exclusive live interview with the **Anambra**



**Broadcasting Service** (TV) on 15th November 2018, to herald the 2018 edition of the literary festival. And that was how we birthed this world class anthology entitled "**Arrows of Words**". We also hope to replicate this every three years after we must have published up to three collections.

We appreciate and congratulate writers from different parts of the world whose works made it to the anthology. And to those whose works could not make it, we say congratulations also, and urge to keep writing and try more in subsequent editions of the anthology. We believe that your best is yet to come.

We also appreciate the online literary magazines and other media outlets (both national and international) that helped in publicizing our calls for submissions to reach wider audience. Our thanks also go to the **Anambra State Library Board** for affording us cosy chamber where we used for reading, vetting and editing of these works. We look forward to continue partnering with you all in all our subsequent events and activities.

To the Society of Young Nigerian Writers, I say thumb-up for achieving this mondo feat.

Achebe deserves the honour, even in the grave, and we shall forever give him the best, at least in our own lifetime as denizens in the literary.

**Izunna Okafor (izunnaokafor70@gmail.com)**

**(Editor-in-Chief, Chinua Achebe Poetry/Essay Anthology,  
for the editorial team:**

**Chuks Njoku**

**Odogwu Emeka Odogwu**

**Anekwe Gladys.**





## CONTRIBUTORS

### 2018 COLLECTIONS

- CHINUA ACHEBE  
*By Brigitte Poirson*
- My Dream Last Night  
*By Nwani Kingsley Sunday*
- Chinua Achebe  
*By Kayode Awojobi*
- Tribute To A Legend  
*By Jerome Okeme*
- The Prophecy That Will Never Leave Us: Chinua Achebe's 'A Man Of The People'  
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- The Pride Falcon  
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- Hero of All  
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*By Chinedu Vincent Okoro*
- Beware Soul Brother  
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- Let's Chant  
*By Kelechukwu Samuel, Ojile*
- There Was A Nation



- By David Adejumo  
→Crusted Sojourner  
By *Uchekwu Agbo*  
→In Memory of Achebe  
By *Samuel Junior Irusota*  
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By *Uzor Onyeka Chinedu*  
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By *Adamu Usman Garko*  
→The Eagle Lives On  
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→The Aura Left By A Colossus  
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By *Simeon Akala*  
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→Wisdom in His Words  
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→Self-Exile  
By *Ogbechie, Deborah .C.*  
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By *Ottih Ifunanya Juliet*  
→Achebe: The Great Son of The Soil  
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By *Onyinye Blessing Okeke*  
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→Chinua Achebe On Protest Writing  
By *Ifeoma Okafor.*



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*Chukwuebuka*
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By *Muoma Valentine Chibueze*
- Goodbye  
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- Ndjida, The Home Of The  
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By *Maureen Onyinye Kenneth*
- My Involvement In Immortalizing  
Him  
By *Odogwu Emeka Odogwu,*

## 2017 COLLECTIONS

- When You See Achebe  
By *Lekan Malik*
- The Power of Inspiration  
By *Adanna Otuechere*
- Man of Letters  
By *Sam Chukwudi Nwokpoku*
- In The Memory of Achebe  
By *Ohita Afeisume*
- The African Treasure  
By *Nwobi Chidubem Valentine*
- The Written Lives Forever  
By *Paul Abiola Oku-ola*
- Chinua Achebe: The Today  
Without Yesterday  
By *Chuks Njoku*
- Deep Down Achebe's Tomb  
By *Felix Chibuisi. P.*
- The Missing Line  
By *Afariogun Ibrahim Abolore*
- Achebe's True Voice  
By *Christopher Calvin*
- Our Story in His-Story  
By *Agholor Henry Nduka*
- Pieces Of A Famous Man.  
By *Nwosu Faith*
- Achebe The Wordsmith  
By *Ezinne Anekwe*
- Achebe: A Hero  
By *Abdulrahman Conteh*
- Passenger  
By *Akinwale Peace Akindayo*
- A Thesis On Chinua Achebe's  
"Things Fall Apart"  
By *Oghenero Genza*
- Chinua Achebe: The Literary  
Icon And CelebratedMoralist.



- By *Marcel Ike Okonkwo*  
→Chinua Achebe: The Mouthpiece  
of Biafra  
By *Asogwa Jude Ikechukwa*  
→Leave To Be Remembered - My  
Unsaid Words  
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→Just Like The Palm Tree

- By *Stanley Ezechukwu*  
→Chinua Achebe: A Man of The  
People.  
By *Chizoba Ngwudo*  
→The Shock of His Death  
By *Stanley Mata*

## 2016 COLLECTIONS

- The Pathfinder Resumes  
By *Isidore Emeka Uzoatu.*  
→Okonkwo  
By *John Chizoba Vincent*  
→Achebe The Silent Parrot  
By *ChuksNjoku.*  
→Chinua Achebe: The Genius  
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By *Udeh Ibiam Ufiem*  
→Chinua Achebe Lives On  
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→Good Night.  
By *Paul Abiola Oku-Ola*  
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→Hero of Africa  
By *Aisha Aminu Bello*  
→Chinua Achebe: A Man  
By *Nwanne Agwu*  
→His Footprint Speaks  
By *Faith Isaac*  
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→Nigeria, Independence And The  
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Reading of Chinua Achebe's A  
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→The Birth of The New Race.

*By Chioma Aniagolu*

→In His Valour

*By Samuel Nzoputachi*

→The Spirit's Pen

*By Lekan Malik*

→Achebe: A Dead That Lives

*By Salami Ugwu Lawrence*

→Quotes By Achebe

*By Compiled by Sam C. Okudah*

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**CHINUA ACHEBE**

*By Brigitte Poirson*

Circling above history, his soul's eye viewed the vastest vista  
How Chinua became Achebe, Nigeria's and the world's Zodiac  
Is a staunch story of hate versus height and fate versus faith  
Never did he accept home as an exile, but as a nation, to shape  
Union along droughts, dramas and dreams. A peaceful bomb  
A man of books and a Booker man, he was an achiever, Achebe.



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## **My Dream Last Night**

*By Nwani Kingsley Sunday*

Approaching a door from the rear, I did behold on the floor, an obscure shape of a shadow. It was lucidly big shadow of a big head. I drew nearer; it grew bigger, this time disclosing the shoulder parts. A further enquiry revealed the entire huge trunk. The shadow's feet left a mighty impression on the sand. I put a foot into one of the footprints. The ratio of the size of my foot to his was approximately 1:99. His footprint could possibly measure the size of my mattress.

"This must be a really mighty man". The thought of that came to my mind as I hurried to take a clearer look.

An aberration scattered the shadow into heavy winds, blowing, flowing to places unseen. There came a confused people amidst the winds. The strong winds had their impacts on them. The pressure from the winds, or should I call it hurricane, made the earth shake. The cloud frowned and broke into tears. The tears became storm with such a heavy downpour that washed the surface of the earth. The flowing water from the rain tried washing away the footprints of the big shadow man. After working on the footprints for a while, the impression was still there. Suddenly but simultaneously, the winds gathered into a thin-thick smoke. The smoke thinly rose high and gradually disappearing into the sky.

"This must be the man from Ogidi. This must be Albert Chinualumogu Achebe". A voice lamented from within the confused people.

"No other but he can create such a scene and still remain untouched like a catalyst". Another voice cried.

"He has scattered the wicked racists and tribalists and gathered his own people into one bunch of unity" A rat ran across the carpet of my room. The sound of its feet on the carpet woke me from my dream into reality.



**Chinua Achebe**

*By Kayode Awojobi*

Here is a man of the people,  
Who knows the differences,  
Between home and exile,  
Even when he knew,  
The trouble with Nigeria,  
With an image of Africa,  
Lingering in his heart,  
But there was a country,  
That may fall apart,  
And when things fall apart,  
Centre holds no more.  
A man of the people,  
Chinua Achebe.

Who shall rescue us?  
When the drum,  
Refuses to make sounds,  
And Chike and the river,  
Are no longer friendly,  
But he knows many drums,  
Even when things were no longer at ease,  
Neither does he threatens,  
With the arrow of God in his custody,  
For a man of the people,  
Is truly God's sent.  
Chinua Achebe!

Just as the gods speaketh,  
He speaks as well,  
Yet, he adore God's arrow,  
Morning yet on creation day,



As Moses held his rod,  
He holds on to his faith,  
A man of the people,  
A titan, a don,

Chinua Achebe!  
When things fall apart,  
Centre holds no more,  
And things may no longer be at ease,  
But God's own people, will always be at peace,  
Rest in peace,  
Chinua Achebe,  
May things never fall apart again!



**Tribute To A Legend (A Poem)**

*By Jerome Okeme*

A man who pays respect to the great  
Paves way for his greatness  
And those whose Palm-Kernels  
Were cracked for them by a benevolent spirit  
Should not forget to be humble.

There was a Country that birthed a fine gentleman  
Who flaunted his red cap like a proud king.  
His Weapon was literature  
For he was an Arrow of God.

Chinua Achebe, A Man of the People  
Some will ask, "Where is he?"  
He is not here, but his works live on  
He was a man whose Pen was mightier than the sword.

To us he left a legacy behind  
And we are not scared to follow his trails  
Since a child's fingers are not scalded by the piece of hot yam  
Which its mother puts into its palm.

If only there was still breathe in his nostril  
He would drown problems with the ink of his pen  
And open the anus of the hen  
With the words of his mouth.

We are No Longer At Ease  
We lack Civil Peace.  
Those boys have destroyed the Anthill of the Savannah  
with their bombing acts  
And Things have Fallen Apart.



Chinua Achebe, the fearless Pen lord.  
If you had died young  
I would have asked you to get life  
But you lived long.  
So I shall ask you  
To come again the way you came before.



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**The Prophecy That Will Never Leave Us: Chinua Achebe's 'A Man of the People' (An Essay)**

*By Henry Chukwuemeka Onyema*

When a true prophet speaks, the oracle's message is heard, irrespective of whether the message is accepted or rejected. In 1966, when he was almost thirty-six, Chinua Achebe made the transition from bestselling author to literary prophet with the publication of his fourth novel '*A Man of the People*.' It was unlike his previous three novels: 'Things Fall Apart,' 'No Longer at Ease,' and 'Arrow of God.' It was not a paean to the black African's past; it did not engage the emerging modern Nigerian society tangled in an unholy tango with the white man's ways and the culture of our forefathers. It was a startlingly different tale.

Set in a fictional post-colonial African country which is a metaphor for Nigeria, the novel mirrors the type of men who took over when colonialism ended and what they did with the honeyed pot of power. The story revolves around the fierce power and love struggle between Chief the Honourable M.A. Nanga, the politician who is an epitome of the new helmsmen and the young and idealistic teacher, Odili Samalu. The subsequent upheaval ended with a military coup.

What is striking about this novel is Achebe's perfect understanding of the forces that shape post-colonial African political reality: the corrupt politicians; the Caucasians whose corrupting tentacles, which by no means is restricted to pecuniary temptations, influence our elite; the young idealists whose antics go against the new order they seek; and the ordinary people whose cynicism fuel the national pastimes of graft and bad governance.



Sadly, the novel resonates with contemporary Nigerian reality. The new Nangas are very much around and far more sophisticated than their fictional progenitor.

Achebe's literary contemporaries saw the seer's spirit in him when the novel came out. The poet, John Pepper Clark, declared, 'Chinua, I know you are a prophet. Everything in this book has happened except a military coup' after reading the novel. Its portrayal of the politics of Nigeria's first republic is striking. Also, way before the January 15 1966 coup, it foreshadowed that military incursion with an unerring accuracy that makes it hard till date for quite a few people to be convinced that Achebe did not have foreknowledge of the coup led by Majors Emmanuel Ifeajuna and Chukwuma Nzeogwu. But there is no evidence that he had such information. Perhaps it is more accurate to state that Achebe's gift as a literary prophet was the uncanny ability to see the end of a fictional journey of a society through its footsteps.

Achebe nearly paid the price for his prophetic gift. The plotters of the second coup on July 29 1966 were convinced he knew about the first coup and came after him and his family in Lagos. Mercifully, they escaped unhurt. '*A Man of the People*' remains a testament to Achebe's incisive reflections on post-colonial Nigeria. This prophet's voice will never leave us.



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## **Immortal Words**

*By Nwokeabia Ifeanyi John*

May I live in the heart of breathing men  
Rather than live in the midst of men  
Such was the echoing sound of your words.  
As a mortal, you may have slept in death  
But your words will never see death.  
Your words like air will continually breed life  
Not just to this generation, but many yet to come.

Like an Iroko, you stood so tall amidst other trees  
Unshaken by the wavering winds of criticisms.  
The power of your wise marriage of ink and paper  
Redeemed the entire black African race  
Inking life to human beings as against being apes.  
The vacuum you left is beyond human occupation.  
You and you alone can always fill it.  
I wished to be given the power to call you back  
From your wonderful bosom of rest.

Like a seer, you saw and unveiled the future  
How would you have reacted in this time!  
Seeing that your prophecies are more felt presently?  
In counting your wisdom, I count our losses.  
In your death, the resurrection of your words was seen  
Which in us today and ever, remains immortal.



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**A Cry**

***By Osa'etin Abienekpen***

Things have really fallen apart  
We are no longer at ease.  
We have been the sacrificial eggs  
On the anthill of religious chauvinism,  
Ethnic superiority and bad governance.

We have been exiled in our homes  
And led on the dead men's path.  
As footprints of the men of the people  
Wiped out from the sands of time,  
We wished we beware of soul brothers.  
Now our morning has refused to dawn  
On creation day.



**Black Ivory**

*By Chidimma Anwusi*

Stratified echoed its harmless blazing armour.  
Strafe-hydrant of African enslavement  
Fulky, Fultery-flack of the Negros fuss in move  
Funerary clit of the white doctrine blitz  
Fun-furnace of the black emancipation rancour  
Lustre ink that mantle the 'Lo' of Europeanization  
Lightening liqueur that scratches the white dubious throats  
Labyrinth of knowledge and literary thoughts  
Gunwale that inculcates black history to itself  
Gunnery of literary doctrine mover of muse in use  
Crystal arrow that pierced the thoughts of the gods  
Though you are no more  
Ipsso-facto, thy greatness remains.



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**The Brave One of Ogidi**  
**By Opara Moses**

Where are you? Oh warlord of the pen  
You who fought with words  
To break the shackles of oppression from the oppressors,  
Where are you? Oh the voice of Ogidi  
You that danced around the water pot of war...  
And drew silence from the voices of death  
Oh illustrious son of Ogidi  
Your image walks through the village market  
As the spirit dancers fold their smiles in the night.

The brave one has gone to a land beyond  
Rain soaks the upaka leaves  
As children naked their pleas in silence,  
The drum from a distance, awakens the kindred of night  
Voices of the crickets upon our roofs  
Oh brave one of Ogidi, since you left  
The road has not been occupied.

There is rust silence colouring every heart  
Oh brave one of Ogidi,  
Things have fallen apart and we are no longer at ease,  
We write our verses in our hearts  
Like a craving for another home  
We are going back where the music started,  
From a distance, I hear the song of the spirit  
Strange meetings of literary gods.

Oh brave one of Ogidi, since you left  
The road has not found itself  
All in all,  
You are the brave one of Ogidi.



**A Legend To Be Remembered**

*By Michael Ikegwu*

Some are born great; some achieve greatness  
Achebe was born great and he achieved greatness  
When I read the works of Achebe  
I see the true nature of what a pen can do  
Pen in the hand of this hero changed Nigeria for good  
His works of art are ever to be remembered

He is a legend; a legend must be remembered  
In the work of things fall apart  
I cried, I wept because things had actually fallen apart  
Achebe is a legend, his pen has changed Nigeria  
Reading Achebe's works,  
I saw reality, I saw talent, creativity and legendary  
With Achebe, writing is real life  
Words interspersed with creativity and reality  
He is indeed an arrow of God;  
a legend to be remembered

He told me I need to domesticate English  
It is a hope that being an Africa, I'm great  
He thought us to be bold, proud of our mother nature  
He has been my muse; because he has the pen of truth  
When I read Achebe's work,  
I'm challenged to take up my legend pen  
He is a legend to be remembered,  
because he has the pen of change  
Things fall apart; apart has things fallen,  
it is a great work from a legend  
He is a legend to be remembered



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**Is Achebe Gone?**

**By Muhammad Auwal Ibrahim**

On one bright day,  
News came to me  
of a patriotic person who fades away  
I need no more details  
The cries in town,  
tank tears,  
couple of crowds  
made me to conclude  
who departed

I was silent by the side  
meditating about the departure.  
The question I asked my self was  
Is he gone?  
Gone forever,  
To where he will not come back  
Where I will not receive nor send him messages

Tell me the truth  
I am not a kid  
I know it must occur  
but I don't know the time  
I also know that we shall go  
where he goes  
Even though we are afraid of going  
but we must go  
Because we are all leaving  
on a tall tree.



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**Endless Birth**

*By Abubakar Sadiq*

In this astral world you ended now you're free.  
An immortal unhindered by physical limitations.

This last sleep strip us naked  
dissolving his smile into the unsullied air like snowflake.

While my goodbye pends yet the life in my sight  
is like a heart dreaming of springs.

In spirit you have moved to your ancestral clime.  
Your end is endless: a birth to eternity.



**Your Work Within Us**

*By Ademola Toheeb*

Thick sensation in the brain  
Flicking the nerve  
To remember our hero  
Long pass to hades.

Vividly the picture appears  
The entire memo brought forth  
of your endless effort  
That gave us a voice  
Among the existing one.

Can the brain neglect your work  
from which we exist?  
Teaching us our way  
Without looking sideways  
Nor trailing them.

Can he resist  
the multiple scenes of your action?  
In making a unity  
Among the disunity.

All day you prophesied  
Which still lay in book  
Swinging to and fro in the air  
Before you pitch your tent  
away from the looters.

It forget not, to transmit  
the mirror of your deed  
Along with those of past



To have a safe abode  
For the selected suffers  
Though thwarted  
It still remains in soul.

Peaceful rest I bid  
Till we feel each warmth  
If eternity exists at all.



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**The Voice of Africa**

*By Nwobi Chidubem Valentine*

The legend of hope  
Who spoke for the voiceless  
A treasure of gold  
All nations wish to possess  
The man of the people  
Whose love never brittles  
Africa's literary giant  
Whose worth is exuberant.

We grieved when you left  
In twain our hearts cleft  
We need someone to wake us from slumber  
As we now wallow in danger  
The pace you set have been trampled upon  
We no longer have a beacon at dawn.

A man of few words  
Whose pen was mightier than swords  
Truly you are gone, but your memories lives  
Your words are gun, only the guilt it kills  
You live with us like tomorrow  
Your moment overshadows our sorrow  
Our children will tell your story  
Generations will sing your glory  
The birds will whistle your name  
You've shown ideas that surpasses the fame

"If we no love wetin we gain"  
You give us joy and no pain  
Rest on "The Voice of Africa"



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**Until We Meet Again Face-to-face**

*By Enewor Amaechi Emmanuel*

This day in November, 1930,  
in Ogidi – a place not in Nigeria,  
you seeped out naked from a crack  
on the body of a woman  
and sprinkled smiles on our faces.

We picked you up as Chike  
in The River, bathed and clothed  
and fed and injected into you  
with the Arrow of God  
the life we live in the coastal world.

You grew so fast  
your head touching the sky  
your busy hands carving the paddle –  
Things fall apart –  
which lassoed us back the boat  
the White river stole from us  
and again, we, Girls at War,  
were home and not Exiled.

But how it happened in 2013  
we didn't know the marauding storm  
would slap us in the face –  
snatch you from our clasp  
and fly beyond our reach and sight  
to the other side of the sea  
leaving us with empty hope.

Our teary eyes bled non-stop  
our gapping mouths cursing that day

wishing you had stayed behind.  
Chinualumuogu, son of Achebe,  
even though you have gone,  
you are still living here with us.

And until we meet again face-to-face  
where we'll never part ways,  
our eyes will never stop bleeding  
our mouths will not stop cursing  
the day you left.



**A Dirge for the Lion**

*By Opara Moses*

You whose word pierced through tyranny  
To bring freedom to the oppressed,  
I call you Agu, whose pen spews fire and rain  
in search of redemption,  
Omenuko, wake up,  
I call on you  
For the market women  
have returned with dirge on their lips...

Agu, where will the Iroko tree fall?  
The firewood has finished,  
who will fetch us more  
to ignite our quenching fire?  
The children are naked,  
who will cloth them with words of hope?  
I call on you Agu,  
wake up,  
the journey is still far,  
Who will lead us into the battle ground?

Our hearts are like empty drums  
filled with dirges  
Where is the warrior of the pen?  
The one whose word silenced our fears  
The one whose silence pierced through walls,  
Oh death! Where is our warrior?  
The children of the spirit are dancing  
around the fire of dawn  
With tears of hope pasted on their hearts.



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## **Deciphering Chinua Achebe's Message**

*By Ebele Geraldine Ojukwu*

The prose as an aspect of literature over time has created a quadrangle for the novelist as an avenue of conveying diverse ideas with the aim of addressing issues stemming mostly from their relationship with their environment or the society at large. It therefore becomes clearly evident that a novelist source material is drawn from happenings around him and inherent in the society he finds himself in. Osofisan also sees the writer as mirrors of the society, for he claims that “the artist lives in society and draws his material from it, hence his imagination is just as socially determined and his fiction is fact, and it is he who takes us along the corridor of contemporary experience, and at the end of it, opens a window to prospective horizons; meaning that art reflects reality” (33-35).

Achebe as a writer mirrors through his work *Anthills of the Savannah*, that Nigeria right from inception has been slowly stripped of what we have, our identity and culture. Humanity is the final sacrifice and poverty the final price. According to him “we have been slowly steamed into well-done mutton since February and all oafs on our public payroll tell us we are doing just fine! No my dear countrymen. This is Brigadier Misfortune of the wilting 202 Brigade, telling you, you are not fine” (27). He is aware that the awakening of our ignorance to knowledge has only succeeded in making the people wobble in ignorance the more, men rather than restore sanity to their known problem choose to act like the anthills that survived to tell the tales of last year bush fires to the new grass of the Savannah. He does not rule the fact that “Recalling is great” (124) why? Because it is only the story that makes us to understand our past and will continue even



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after we are gone but anybody that keeps narrating these stories without finding solutions and conquering his own fears is like “the arrogant fool who sits astride the story as though it were a bowl of foo-foo set before him by his wife, understands little about the world. The story will roll him into a ball, dip him in the soup and swallow him first. I tell you he is like the puppy that swings himself around and farts into a blazing fire with the aim to put it out. Can he? No, the story is everything ... like fire, when it is not blazing it is smouldering under its own ashes or sleeping and resting inside its flint-house” (AOS 124).

Achebe’s effort in writing is to enlarge our scope of thinking. His aim wasn’t for us to keep investigating the cause of our stagnation but to take the bull by its horn. As he rightly quotes “to blame all these things on imperialism and international capitalism as our modish radicals want us to do ...is like going to arrest the village black smith every time a man hacks his fellow to death. (AOS, 159).

**Remembering Chinua Achebe**  
*By Ayelabowo Oluwasina*

When things fell apart  
In the Ibo tribe  
From family life to religion  
Through imperialism  
Achebe was not sedentary.

African life during imperialism  
Which our generation wouldn't know  
Was filmed by his mind and cerebrum  
Into 'Things Fall Apart'  
Sampling the Ibo tribe for African entirety  
For us to continually know  
The progenitor of Africa cultural change.

He brought to knowledge  
Through the account of records  
The dark days of our dearest nation  
When we lived in subservience  
Despite the right to freedom  
When we lived in scarcity and wants  
Upon our natural endowments  
In one of his books

Where continued beauty prior independence  
The struggle to the liberty  
The life after freedom  
That keeps diminishing  
In value and morals  
Daily as the clock ticks  
Were succinctly exhume  
In the personal history of Biafra



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‘There was a country’.

The theme of lies and deceit  
Depicting Nigeria civil service  
And entire business system  
Reveal your cerebral coherence  
And dexterity of realistic comparison  
‘In No Longer at Ease’.

Oh Chinua Achebe!  
Blessed is thy memory  
That daily lingers in thousand minds.

Wish you were here with us this day  
To write on the *Shame of Our Independence!*



**The Journey of the Afro-Giant**

**By Nwadike Rosemary N.**

Chinua Achebe

The giant that dances mesmerizingly

To the Ijele drum

The rhythm of origin vibrating on his chest

Red and white beads jingling round his neck.

He splashes his blue blood on the white soil

The soil of bravery

The sands of time

His blue blood forms the seas

That flow to the hungry.

It evaporates to the air

Youths eager to take the sublime breath

He takes the fiery sword

and puts it in the hands of Nwanza

The little bird that sings so sweetly

To circle the globe and strike Ijolomoba

The god of ignorance

And his seven hideous princes.

The white wolves attack

But, oh, Achebe stands unwounded

He sheds his blue blood

For Ancestry

For Ancestors

He stands tall like the iroko

Men, women, children, look up to his branches

Outstretched to the stars,

the moon, the sun.



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He sheds and spreads his leaves  
Even down to Olympus  
Every hand holds a petal forthwith  
Staring deep into its luminescence  
That magnets all gaze in infinitude  
At the centre of the equator  
The proud Iroko stands  
Its roots firmly situated in the depths of the ground  
In the depths of every red bundle  
He's the Achebe we'll never forget



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**The Pride Falcon**

*By Alaukwu Godknows*

The prideful falcon  
Whose pride rest on her wings  
That ignored to perch on the twig  
Which seems too low to perch.

The prideful falcon  
Whose imperfections tend to glow  
Like a galaxy in the dark sky  
Sparkling, and sparkling on the widen gyre.

On her flying peak she boasted  
Enjoying the moment she bested  
Flapping her wings in pride  
Crashing her pride in soonest.

Terribly her beak damaged  
Because she refused to listen  
To the tiny voice of the falconer  
And things fall apart.

On the twig that was  
In the forest that was  
And in the country that was.



**Hero of All**

***By Agu Gift Ihuoma***

Not all heroes wear hoods and capes,  
Some wear armours of inks and books,  
Alas, the uphold of truth isn't baked,  
Upon this Nile was the king of books.

Although robbed of air he breathes,  
Through us, the life of his words never dies,  
The loudness in the silence of his ink speaks,  
And death, its victory on his soul dies.

His life,  
Like day breaking on a riverside,  
Like sunlight upon the water, was his light,  
Forever and more, his works would be remembered.

Under the gaze of none,  
The mantle of grooming kings he picked,  
Having drunk out of poverty in more years than one,  
By his kiss of hope, his goodness ticks.

Life is like a giant hawk,  
Preying off the chicks of the hen,  
Yet all he welcomed with a hug,  
And made homes for many out of a den.

Today, with the dance of the breeze,  
Upholding your cup of goodwill,  
Kicking out all you did like a killer disease,  
Your zeal, an example of great sheer will.

I stand here today,  
Upholding my cap of respect,  
A message through your prints,  
I received again,  
You were a man whose words are never held less.



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**There Was a Man**

*By Chidiebere Ezekwesili*

Yesteryears, there was a man,  
no one knew who he would be,  
only him could fathom his fate,  
for Providence fought on his side.

His home is the light of the nation,  
though it was a home for all,  
yet he strove to bear the light,  
now that is a beacon for all.

Only the eyes that see in secret could,  
detect the feet that treads secretly,  
In the eyes of many he treaded rightfully,  
his benign gestures all applauded.

In years forward he embraced his fate,  
neither did he relent nor was slothful,  
days and nights he tilled and mined,  
and all he was found were priceless gems.

Today he is just a story,  
yesterday he was not,  
tomorrow he will be a guide,  
from him all legends will manifest.

When a great man is seen,  
surely would his long nose be seen,  
my salute to his irreplaceable legacy,  
engraved in the scrolls of the legends.



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His works manifested in the daylight,  
his creativity an amazement to all mortal,  
his voice a balm to the wounded,  
his pen a sword to the oppressed.

What would this country be if not him?  
how would we find ourselves,  
if not his gigantic lighthouse?  
His ink was a trail to our destination.

My condolence to his abode,  
my consolation to those he left behind,  
though my ink wouldn't be enough to thank everyone,  
sure it would scribble his goodness on paper.

Providence be thanked for creating such an opportunity,  
not only to us but to our posterities,  
for he truly fought his battles,  
and bestowed on him the name,  
Chinualumogu Achebe.



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## **The Grand Patron**

*By Chinedu Vincent Okoro*

The Community still sings the dirge  
Many moons have sailed past  
Since the tragic moment you turned up  
your once swift, mobile toes.  
Tear marks still tattoo the mourners' face  
All wish you still take this road.

Four scores and eight ago  
A long time it seems  
Echoes of joy sounded in Ogidi  
A great land sandwiched between  
Delta and Imo States of Nigeria  
A literary giant was born.

The titan grew tall like an iroko  
He, the source of ingenuity and direction  
To millions of budding literary icons  
In Africa and the Whiteman's land.

The colossus bore the pain of restoration  
of the dignity and heritage of our nation  
Nigeria, our continent; Africa and her  
Extravagantly-talented creative minds  
Through his ever-flowing ink of vocal

Like a giant, he stood tall and against  
the oppression and subjugation of his people  
and the imposition of alien doctrines  
in Africa as if he were a religious abolitionist.



His fingers and ink were dogged  
And fearless in trashing souls  
Who meant doom and destruction for  
The African race.

Every of his genuine prophesies  
As evinced in his classical book  
"The Man of the People"  
Is now whipping us like Pharaoh's  
Wrath, in our society.

He brought pride to Igbo nation.  
He, the power of elocution;  
A polyglot among his contemporaries  
His grammatical prowess glistening  
Even among white silver medals  
A much-sought-after concoction  
In the entire universe.

All hail Papa Chinua Achebe!  
The grand patron of African creative minds!  
The trailblazer in the literary paradise!  
The mouthpiece of African race!  
The proud son of our father land!  
You died a legend, a hero and an Icon.  
The Greatest of all African progenitors.



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**Beware Soul Brother**

*By Uchenna Odukwu*

Beware soul brother!  
They'll come from the East  
With their crispy mints  
From the west with  
Their ink and lines  
From the north with  
Flood of edibles  
From the south with  
Shinning black water  
Cobbled together like  
Twisted ore and lead.

Beware soul brother!  
They'll never mean what they say  
Or say what they mean

Beware soul brother!  
It was never like this  
Until our bleached ancestors  
Planted a colony for the cunny  
A garden for the kleptomaniacs.

Beware soul brother!  
Now we seem to re-echo  
Chinua Achebe's silent screams  
His thoughts pounding  
In our hearts like the pestle  
Thrusting the hairy yam meal.

Beware soul brother!



Yesterday has gone so soon  
In the minds of the colonists  
Now suffering and smiling  
Whispering dry speech of hope  
Yet unwilling to walk the path  
Chinua Achebe trod with his bleeding pen  
Beware soul brother!



## **Let's Chant**

*By Kelechukwu Samuel, Ojile*

Caterpillars may not know how  
beautiful they are  
but being no longer at ease, now  
tell me what you see I see a butterfly,  
blooming in excellence.  
Fly, spread your wings and define the air,  
Tell them to the birds.

Oh, I remember, that same spot  
where Nnanyi stood  
showing us the arrow of God,  
things not understood.

Let's chant,  
Oke nwoke bu oke nwoke  
in foreign lands too.

Let's chant,  
with the silence of the night's breeze  
whispering his deeds.

Let's chant,  
that our father's proverbs unveil  
wise words do not fail.

Let's chant,  
for the course of fine history  
beckons on us all  
Chinua Achebe is the star  
glistened in our call.

I eat alligator pepper,  
with chalk stains on my feet.  
And, Okonkwo bears me witness,  
Nna anyi, oh, I wished!



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**There Was A Nation**  
*By David Adejumo*

There was a Nation,  
an ageless Iroko,  
in the 'anthills  
of the Savannah'.  
A lost tribe of Israel,  
laden with men  
of ingenuity,  
and creative innovations.  
A nation birthed,  
under the influence  
of Nri-Awka.

There was a Nation,  
a land that suffered  
the worst injustice  
and tribulations,  
dwindling their population  
and starving a  
whole generation.'  
No longer could they  
hear the tales by moonlight,  
of Okonkwo's woes'  
in the village square,  
when 'things fell apart'.  
War took thy pride,  
Thou art a lost tribe,  
but we solemnly hope,  
A Nation shall rise.



There was a Nation,  
The land of unending coal,  
a priceless endowment,  
before foreign rule,  
stole that away.

In the New Yam Festivals,  
They all joy  
and jolly  
in good moods,  
in the land  
of the rising sun.



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**Crusted Sojourner**  
*By Uchehukwu Agbo*

I died yesterday  
But then I woke  
To the freezing ember of crude Niger sun  
Pouring over me  
like heated oil from cracked shell nuts  
I died to winter  
But I woke in harmattan  
To the crusty scent of burning Udara leaves  
atoning for the sins of starved toiling hands  
But the grave was really such a place.

Cold, muddy, but deeply comforting  
The mingling intercourse between worms and ants  
Slipping in and out of my delicate parts  
They picked my nose  
But I could not sneeze  
I remembered the thunder  
It was long foretold  
My brain was numb and alive  
But termites had joined the feast  
Those faithful servants of shrewd mother earth  
Abyss was unusually so.

Quiet and rumbling  
The cries seemed like a far coveted nightmare  
By logs, our logs.  
Logs like me  
Who laugh and thrive in the anguish of others  
I died yesterday  
But a hand woke me up  
To death, my death  
To the crumbling shadows I had made.  
Welcome back Achebe.



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**In Memory of Achebe**

*By Samuel Junior Irusota*

If I were Chinua Achebe,  
My pen would write a basket of novel  
Like 'Things Fall Apart'

If I were the father of African literature,  
My ink would flow in blood  
Like Chike and the river,

If I were a literary star,  
My pen would sing  
Like the Anthills of Savannah,

If were a poetic god,  
I would write my name on the sands of time  
Like the Leopard that never changes her spots



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**The Testament of African Literature**  
*By Uzor Onyeka Chinedu*

Words cannot capture,  
The mind cannot decipher,  
The magnitude of impact,  
Designed from the creative world of literature.

The lip of the world is tamed,  
It cannot express your fame,  
Even with some elements of pain,  
Years after your demise.

No one can dismiss,  
The voice of your works,  
It still speaks louder than the voices,  
emanating from the great beyond,  
Just like the voice of the greet deep,  
It cannot be silenced.

Creation craves for your autograph,  
Willing to pay the price,  
Ready to commit itself,  
to the course of exploits acquisition,  
In the vacuum left by you,  
In the world of literature.

Words are few,  
Expressions are numerous,  
But we will continually testify,  
of the wonders of your works,  
Shut from the arrow of God,  
That made things fall apart,



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Making mortals crave  
for the anthills of the Savannah,  
In a land where there was no country.

Warning brothers to beware their soul,  
Causing girls to be at war,  
To paint an image of Africa,  
Forming a man of the people,  
Which formulates the trouble with Nigeria,  
And finally men are no longer at ease.

Experience cannot fathom your work,  
Intuition cannot capture,  
Neither can it rapture,  
The impact you have made,  
Upon the tablets of stone,  
With the ink of Gold,  
And within the confines,  
Of the canvass of the heart of men.

Your works speak expressly  
of dedicated years of study,  
Your works speak expressly  
of hard work.

Men crave  
for those works of yours  
To become stepping stones,  
To the unexplored world of literature.

You took your nation out of its confines,  
And delivered it into the realm of exploits  
This is my testament,  
As I pay my allegiance,  
To the father of African literature.



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**Wind**

*By Adamu Usman Garko*

Heaps of tears carry pain  
With a plethora of silent cries  
Curling our fain  
With a bitter fold  
Our nerves were from him  
Like a marsh from sheen  
And from the art of gaiety  
And comely mirror

Then wind came  
With a proud face like an unknown pace  
of a strange passer-by  
And embraced our ghosts  
With nostalgia  
With departure  
And called him the past of the present



**The Eagle Lives On**  
*By Henrietta Okafor*

Play loud the ikolo  
For the roko stands tall  
For Africa and Nigeria  
Stand fearless forever.

Play loud the ikolo  
For the eagle has landed  
Joyce came with his Mister Johnson  
And you cried out, not my Africa.

You retorted with Things Fall Apart  
And set the records straight  
Bemoaned our fate as a people  
On the hands of our colonial terrorists.

The oppressors of our land  
Who trampled on our rights  
And called our ways crude  
Our religion false

Called our tongue barbaric  
Our tradition ungodly  
Our ways they called primitive  
Our fathers' culture unhallowed

Chinualum ogu  
Your God has fought for you,  
Yes  
Recognition here and there.



For your brilliant prowess  
Revealed the Whiteman's plot  
to divide us further apart  
For he put a knife on our binder  
And the falcon heard not the falconer.

You threw them the arrows of God  
and they left us so  
Winterbourne roared  
Our mosquitoes thrived  
Life leaders reigned.

You gave them the man of the people  
Pointed at the anthills of Savannah  
Then warned of  
The trouble with Nigeria.

You cried, you wailed  
The impending doom you said  
Is like no other  
But they laughed and played and did not listen.

They wouldn't listen,  
they didn't care  
Alas, you proclaimed there was a country  
You took a bow and left  
Yet the eagle lives on.



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**The Aura Left by a Colossus**  
*By Adisa Samuel Dare*

According to Barrack Obama, a former President of the United States of America, in his speech delivered at the Mandela's memorial; it is hard to eulogize any man -- to capture in words, not just the facts and the dates that make a life, but essential truth of a person, their private joys and sorrows, the quiet moments and unique qualities....

"Chinua Achebe was born on 16th of November, 1930 prior to the Biafra war, belonging to the Igbo tribe, in which storytelling was their mainstay and an integral part of their community. Prolific in business and politics, and gifted with a good handwriting and reading skills, he worked hard to develop his own style and was regarded as the pioneer of the creation of the Nigerian novel.

His style relies heavily on the Igbo oral tradition and combined straightforward narration with representation of folk stories, proverbs and oratory. His education was furthered by the collages his father hung on the walls of their home as wells as almanacs and numerous bricks. However, his success cannot be carved on a wood but on gold and its essence cannot be fully understood unless we cease his work – the characteristics or attributes he possessed, leverage on it and via it we can make progress ourselves.

With a heartfelt joy, I announce to us that Late Albert Chinualumogu Achebe was a perfect example of what could be referred to as an epitome of change. The reason being that, he saw a need for it, he ventured into it, not minding what lies ahead, and fortunately he was able to demonstrate it and achieve something worthwhile out of it .“Nobody can teach me who I am. You can describe parts of me, but who I am and what I am are something I have to find out myself.” This, late Achebe said, in order to make



youths understand the place of finding the hidden treasures that are embedded in them. Anybody can describe you but not everybody can give a good description of what and who you are. You are such a rare gem!

He made use of people, ideas and resources. These are the three basic elements that helped him in his journey and to realize his goals. Quitting Medicine for English, History and Theology taught us that irrespective of how everything is, once one loves something or develops interest in it, he can go to any extent in order to get it.

Conclusively, this is a call unto the youths who think they are nothing due to their race. I can boldly tell you that if Late Achebe could make it, then you can! It's high time we called ourselves to responsibility. We are not too small neither are we too big. He indeed lived a life worthy of emulation. I celebrate him for bringing out the true colour of Africa. If you are not comfortable with someone else's story, create yours! Discover your potentials, carve a niche for yourself and become relevant in the global sphere.



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**The Iroko and Earth**

*By Simeon Akala*

This begins with roots speaking to the ears of the earth,  
Just as water drips from the body  
tell the flow of memories  
I hear things fall apart in this path with no sunrise  
And how the heart is no longer at ease with the body.

I have not seen drums tremble in silence of songs for a dead man  
And trees with their leaves wish him farewell,  
I have not seen how windows of heart open for mourns,  
And darkness crawls into faces with tears.



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**Road to Never Ending**  
*By Somuyiwa Oreoluwa Mary*

Though Brave and bold,  
Courageous and selfless,  
A bound breaker and a fighter,  
Fighter of personal belief,  
Yet 'things fall apart'  
In struggle with foreign culture.

Africans, 'no longer at ease',  
Leaders at loggerheads.  
Writing he 'weaponized'  
to tackle the colonialists  
Like a pope 'the arrow of God'  
is beckoned,  
For spiritual safety.

Relentless in writing,  
Despite visible hurdles,  
Became a 'man of the people',  
But after the Biafra war,  
He took a never ending rest,  
To 'home and exile'.  
Oh! Great hero  
Chinua Achebe



**Achebe: The Colossus**

*By Ulsi Toochukwu Christopher*

As a prime-eagle  
Achebe perched on the mountain's top  
His voice echoing a thousand times  
Every now and then  
Beyond seven seas and caves.

Achebe, the ancient iroko  
That stood on a hill  
Whose branches cover even the Sahara  
With the histories of his people  
Who dance in the sun  
With gold-crested feet and wrists  
And hearts filled with rose waters.

Achebe, the elixir of the east  
We drink from his pool of wisdom  
Like the Omambala pool  
And hold him tight  
Like the banner of freedom  
With the bullets of his mighty pen  
Piercing through the heads  
Of both his lovers and haters  
From the dying River Niger  
To the plagued Niles of Egypt



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**Beautiful Smiles (For Chinua Achebe—1930-2013)**

*By Nosakhare Collins*

He wore beautiful smiles.  
He died and left his knowledge behind  
during the Nigerian/Biafran war.  
If he had known  
he would have found a solution  
to the high-pitched problem.

The problem would've been on cinemas  
and placards, or movies  
and the unwise men  
spilling out the mouth of crusaders for injustice.

Instead  
they lie only to claim and embezzle funds  
and after living long there,  
They bury their bones in another man country,  
Instead of following the legacy of an icon  
who built his knowledge with hardwork and benevolence.  
in a country we regard as shameful and brutal substance.  
Achebe's heart will never flutter  
holding a boy's hands  
and whipping his tears  
and making him feel comfortable.

Achebe would never leave footprint  
on a boy's house or laugh in the wind  
as his feet clap the shoulders of his grandpa  
he had begged to see someday.  
Achebe would never again  
hear the sound of music playing the song of Fela



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on his radio station and dancing to the rhythm of it.  
Achebe would never again hear the sounds of rain  
dropping on top of his roof.  
Or hitting his window  
and he would never again hear the sounds of thunder  
that crowd people into his grandfather's house.

Few tears were shed  
when a mother with her baby  
were lowered into the ground  
And the world still stands to dig the grave  
But forget to repair the damage road.

The world needs to learn the language of life.  
The love of precious life.  
Let peace and love ring for the unspoken girl  
and her mother  
who died  
And all their beautiful smiles in heaven



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**My Ode to the Rock of Knowledge**

*By Ikebuaku Favour Chioma*

My ode goes to him  
A great pillar of knowledge  
Our great lion in the den of pens  
Blazing in his plethora of awards  
Lighting out the gloom of his people

My ode goes to him  
A pride of his motherland  
Who upheld his culture and her values  
Informed the white about the black  
As the mouthpiece of his dear clime.

My ode goes to him  
The great master of wisdom  
Who dominated in his field and fame  
Combated our haters with pen  
And educated our fighters in his siege

My ode goes to him  
Our freedom fighter in letters  
The voice of the silenced and oppressed  
The defender of his thought and belief  
Our master in the feast of papers.



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## Evening Catechism on Chinua's "There Was a County"

*By Ude Ibiam Ufiem*

Ironically, as this title may seem, it holds in equity the truth we all may seem to agree with.

Before the coming of the white man, our country lived in peace and harmony, that even the wisdom of the white man could not fathom such. Then, we knew no man by his religion. We struggled for no religious domination, neither did we consider the shedding of blood as a way of giving our public opinion and stand on our Democratic matters.

When a man begins to tell the story of the horror's that befell his village in a book, readers will assume that he has been struck mad, by the gods of the land.

Achebe in his book "*There Was a Country*", tried on his account to bring back to view and remembrance, the conflicts-ridden road and horrific event of our dark days, and also to remind us of the story, we are almost forgetting.

Some see his work as a tool of inciting hostility again among Nigerian's, but in reality, is it actually the way careless men have made it seem?

His work parts memoir, narrative and historical accounts for the injustice and humiliation a part of Nigeria, the Igbo's, suffered on the basis of demanding their freedom. His work also portrays the non-transparency of public journalism in a conflict society like ours, and the artistic roles of writers to these menaces.

In school, we were taught about the history of British Empire, but we were not taught about the history of our country; and which country survives without the knowledge of its history by its citizens?



The sadism, cruelty and brutality let loose upon us in the civil war, cannot be easily done away with. The horror of the civil war still looms around like that of June 12. The stains of that genocide - attempt can still be seen on the clothes we wear today in this hut called Nigeria.

The popular adage has it that he who does not know where the rain started to beat him, will not know where it will stop beating him. Our society has gone wild, cold and brutal because of the lies we have been fed with, as real substance of the war. If we cannot deduce where we got it wrong from our past, how profitable is our ignorance to the success of our tomorrow?

I strongly believe that Achebe's work as a good chief Shepherd is not to incite hostility and conflict in an already hostile community of ours, but to help us remember from where we have fallen, and have us, redress our steps. We have really come of age, and we are too educated for these conflicts.

I will end this evening catechism this way: Achebe may not have told the whole story well, but he has pointed out some critical key points that led to the war, and the lessons well can learn from, to avert further casualties.

Woe to such a man, who learns nothing out of history.

**Achebe: A Man of the People**  
*By Priscilla Ahaiwe*

Chike had decided to cross the river,  
Before he envisaged he was travelling to  
the beginning of the world.  
The world, where there were just two rivers-  
one good and one bad,  
the darkest places on the earth.

The earth where the dirge of the soulful  
Abia drums, could be heard from a distance.  
Ahhh he wept softly- for indeed there was a country,  
One in which the time of innocence,  
Had dissipated quickly into a thing of oblivion.

Now he realised  
that the leopard really had gotten his claws,  
from the hopeless scratch of his palm,  
against the hardened Omu rock.  
Now he knows that this is the trouble with Nigeria:  
we all are stuck in the abyss-  
between home and exile.

Everyday, things are falling apart,  
Okonkwo has hopped on a boat to Biafra,  
To appease the gods of Umuofia,  
For they were no longer at ease,  
But the boat soon capsized,  
And everyone drowned:  
Apparently the gods cannot be appeased.



We can only be saved by the arrow of God,  
But only if Ezeulu the chief priest is dead,  
And the anthills of the  
Savannah-Are rescued by Oriko.  
For the fate of Kangan,  
Hung on a thin balance.  
He is surely a man of the people,  
Like Odili, he it is,  
who will liberate the girls at war,  
He will squash our impediments,  
He will raise our hopes!



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**A Garland (Tribute to Chinua Achebe)**

**By Onafowokan Taofeek Busayo**

When body creaks inside cones of memories  
Whilst that echoes the imageries of histories  
As the soldier ants fought the plights with their might  
He was the eyes that sore and saw every right.

In the past, he passed through the parsed lands  
Where he found his orbit around the prison yards  
A freedom fighter without sword, gun, or piece  
He was the silence that spoke in millennium peace.

Let's jog to the voyage of the dark times;  
That cloaked our skies with oppressions and grievances  
Where our tears rallied in the shrub gown of African heroes  
Like the White Sea kept in a coconut blouse.

I saw his skin reeled with risible muscles  
In solitary confinement basked with manacles  
He was the landscape every nation huddles  
So, he dug the paths to human's right angles

I differ the years of the 'things fall apart'  
Like the raindrops kept between the eyes and the sky  
I remember how his flag reins our country's pride  
Like that; his memoir has set our hands to ride



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**Eternal Ink**

*By Christopher Maureen Amarachi*

You tried to touch the stars  
Climbing all hurdles  
With that raffia pains  
But, Things Fell Apart

You tried to rise  
Feeding with the mice  
But, uneasy lies the head that wears the crown  
So, Things Were no Longer at Ease  
Seeing all troubles and struggles  
Trials and tribulations Ups and downs  
That soft Arrow of God still came through  
The earth shall never get dried of thy ink

Never let thy feather fall like death  
Thy works shall still be seen on shelves  
Shelves of the ancients will behold thy ink  
And thy eternal motivation shall grow greys



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**Letter to A Scribe In Valhalla**

*By Alade Abayomi Idris*

Dear Sir,

If positive influence is truly a prerequisite up there, I believe you would be seated in the right hand side of the Lord doing what you know how to do best. By now, angels would have been celebrating your write-ups the way men celebrate your THINGS FALL APART and other works. We miss you dearly sir. People who were close to you said they missed the tales you used to tell them in the night when gentle gale roved and the moon and stars beautifully decorated the dark raiment of the sky. Several others such as myself who didn't have the opportunity of getting close to you to hear you tell your tales but relied on your constant writings equally miss you.

If the dead could truly see the living as the rich Igbo tradition you held in high esteem preached, and also as depicted in many African literature which you were regard as the Father; you would see that the shambolic country you tried to ameliorate before you were called is still in a sorry state. Things are no longer at ease down here. Now that a man from the North holds the reins of the country, the centre has further failed. Human rights are no longer fundamental. Wanton destructions of lives and properties are chronological norms that we lived with. Aba killings, Benue massacre and the on-going Kaduna religio-fascistic showdown are starring anomalies that your ever dancing pen would have written something meaningful about *Were You Here*.

Had death not uprooted you from our midst, I know you would have given us fabulous write-ups to read. That was how prolific you were. We are so used to receiving fresh works from you that we forget to re-read the prophetic and panacea works you had given to us. Had the educated elites taken some time to re-read



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just few of your works, we could have averted some of the ills we are presently suffering in our political, social, religious and cultural lives. If we had listened to the dying voice of yours as contained in "*There Was a Country*", Aba killings and several others could have been tactfully stopped.

I share in your thought that things can still be done to make the country better. I urge you to appear to meaningful Nigerians the way Ghost appeared to Hamlet in the famous Shakespearean HAMLET to spur them to do the needful. The souls of yours and several others in Valhalla should team up and join the mortal Nigerians in the fight to make the country better. Once again, I wish death waited a little longer for you to wield more of your literary sauce for our consumption. I miss you sir. Till we meet again, rest on Albert Chinualumogu Achebe.

Your avid reader, Alade A. Idris.



**Leviathan**

**By Moustapha CISSE**

My heart beats all the time,  
For reasons unknown  
The shooting star lost in this season  
I felt your pain when you shouted lonely  
I glanced in the sky but I didn't see your face  
The darkness of the gleam needs civil peace

Why did he try to steal my heart?  
The real face of the things fall apart  
My heart suffers now on this hallow  
Becomes uncontrollable in this way  
Recognize it through the song of the bird

Africa lost leviathan, man of the people  
We don't need medicine when we are sick  
Chinua Achebe changed Africa without stick,  
When he tried to cure Africa's disease  
With him, Africa was No Longer at Ease

Africa don't like a doctor,  
Africa gets his own doctor  
Africa don't need hospital for curing his wound  
The history of slave was excruciating round  
We don't need order when we have the sun  
With arrow of God, Africa will get a glimpse shelter

Don't let him die, peace reflect your shadow  
You reach to bring us in the heaven  
African youths need your insight for achieving dreams  
Another Africa depends on your light  
God bless Africa, God bless Achebe



Achebe was medicine and our reason to life  
Anthills of the Savannah, tears shed with death  
Achebe was a shadow against the sun  
Rain of trees, African Short Stories  
Achebe was oxygen for saving trees



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## **Chinualumogu**

*By Shamsiyyah Bashir*

When God fights on your behalf, you'd become the "*Arrow of God*", "A man of the people", and you'd realize "Things fall apart" just like the lion of Ogidi, Achebe the father of folk stories, proverbs and Oratory.

16th November 1930 is always a day to remember, the day the cream on the crop of Nigeria's literature was released to the family of Isaiah Okafor Achebe and Janet Anaenechi Iloegbunam. St Philips Central School Nekede and Government College Umahia will always be remembered for building the foundation of Achebe's education after which the University College groomed and nurtured him turning him into a fountain of knowledge.

If and only if Joyce Cary hadn't written "Mister Johnson" then maybe, just maybe Achebe would have been a doctor attending to those feeling green till the end of his life and wouldn't have ventured into English, History and Theology, neither would he have worked with the Nigerian Broadcasting Service (NBS). "Enugu" the coal city was where he found his sweet ember Christiana Chinwe Okolo. Oh Christie! It all started with magazines and gifts not forgetting the novel "*No Longer At Ease* (1960)" dedicated out of love. 10th September, 1961 was a day of pride and joy at the Chapel of Resurrection University of Ibadan as the lion of Ogidi tied the knot with his sweetheart Christie. A bountiful marriage that produced blissful children Chinelo, Ikechukwu, Chidi and Nwando.

With St Louis Literary Award 1999, Nigerian National Order of Merit Award 1978, Man Booker International Prize 2007, Dorothy and Lillian Gish prize 2010, with over 30 honorary degrees, collection of poems and that of short stories, Albert Chinualumogua Achebe is beyond shadow of a doubt, the father of modern African writing and Africa's greatest short story teller.



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## **Chinua and I; An Ode to Literary Genius**

*By Fadeke Olufunke Alabi*

My first encounter with the Mastery Piece *Things Fall Apart* was not by reading the fine print but by hearing the discourse of the rise and fall of a man amongst family members and friends. Soon enough, the phrase “things fall apart” had become a household phrase. A 7-year-old me who had started to develop interest in the literary world knew that if there was any book to have ever been written by a Nigerian and termed the greatest, it definitely was *Things Fall Apart*.

It took me 18 years to finally open the chapters but all along this was a Novel whose words I had always seen without looking at, felt without touching and listened to without hearing.

From the first line, it started as a journey into the life of a man whose youth represented everything I currently stand for – deep resonance for fear of rejection, abandonment, failure and shame. It also ended with the long old principle of life that change is constant and if we are not ready to accept it, the world as we want it would fade away with us which even though written many years ago, aptly represents the struggle and challenges currently faced with our Nigerian Elders and Technology in the 21st century amongst other things.

Chinua Achebe, had from an early stage shaped my mentality about life and the revering effects of transition from childhood to adolescence. He was more of a story teller than a fiction writer, his choice of words and his ability to drive you straight into the minds, thoughts and feelings of a character are unparalleled to me and has remained so over the years despite the number of books I have read and come across. He was truly a literary genius and his works continue to give me hope that no matter who I am, where I am and what I do, I have the ability to use my gift to leave a mark in the world.



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**Wisdom in His Words**

*By Adanna Otuechere*

Wise was he, a man like Solomon  
Good at judgment and discernment  
A man of substantial worth  
No eyes ever seen his works and remained the same  
Wisdom is in his words

With every stroke of the pen,  
Came great knowledge and understanding  
He never dropped his pen  
Everyone felt his presence  
Wisdom in his words

Chinua Achebe, words alone cannot describe you  
All who read your works were impregnated with great wisdom  
Your presence alone left mouths in awe  
The sweetness of your works  
Fills up an empty stomach  
Wisdom indeed beautifies his words



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**Self-Exile**

*By Ogbechie, Deborah .C.*

I grew up with tales

Tales of how she has never been good enough  
of how her calabash is bored with holes  
of how her farm talks at night  
and her market, an onlooker of passers-by.

So, I grew up hating the beings of this wildness,  
of which I was a part

With a weary heart

I travelled down into told tales

With an eye of a god

I passed through the body of living bodies  
standing like a softened yam  
painted with mixture of palm oil and salt

As I travelled down this whispering village

I saw men and women

drenched by their calabash

men and women

harvesting bricks, upon bricks

men and women

selling husk of corn as corn

Ah! Instantly, I knew the dry leaf inside my head  
was only telling a lie

A huge lie! when it whispered

“here is home, where we all come from”

Tell me!

How can I accept home?

I whose mother never stepped in the market



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I, whose father never saw a farm,  
I, who never drank from the holed calabash.  
How?

Just tell me!  
how can home be I,  
walking in with only a faded pen?  
Tell me  
how can home call me Son,  
and my first name I can barely pronounce.  
How?  
How can home be I named shame?

They say home is tears  
But I see their wrong now  
Home can't be tears when it cracks a lot crack joke  
The home I see has humour than they all thought

Home is happy  
Really... humorous



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**The Great Iroko Tree**  
*By Ottih Ifunanya Juliet*

Ogidi brought forth an iroko  
Ogidi bribed off an iroko.  
The son of the soil Chinualumogu  
Fascinating and inspiring.  
Culturally bred and religiously oriented.

Things fell apart when Ogidi bribed off an iroko.  
It stood comely and vigorously.  
The iroko with all its tallness,  
allowed its fruit fall for the  
Smaller animals.

The iroko's sword bled for the less privileged.  
And its sword spoke the truth.  
The iroko, the lover of his culture.  
Fought against racism with its total potency.

In the Igbo village of Ogidi,  
the iroko was conceived  
He was yet known for his great deeds.  
But sure he was a god.  
He specified himself as the black iroko.  
There was no limitation to him.

The renowned sword bearer was popularly blonde.  
Considering them legally blonde.  
It was like a specific race was depressed.  
Could it be because of their colour?  
or because their kinky hair could form a pony tail?

We looked ourselves in the mirror.  
We belittled our potentials  
Until we read the great iroko's orthography.  
Yet the day we nurtured ourselves with his handwriting



We became bold enough  
to compare our kinky hair to the blonde one.

We allowed our pen bleed.  
Our wrath would be smelt in our books.  
Of course it wasn't yet a master piece,  
but its formulation was inspired by  
the great works of the iroko.

Instead of dyeing our hair to blonde  
like the others who seek recognition  
We braided our kinky hair as our identity was defined.  
Chinualumogua implied African.  
Chinualumogua implied identity.  
Chinualumogua implied greatness.

Leaving the comfort of my bed,  
It was a shock of the iroko's downfall  
It has fallen beneath the soil of Ogidi.  
Tears dripped but wasn't enough to the bream.

We never got a chance with the iroko  
We wept for not creating one,  
We regretted our follow ups alone without action.  
Chinualumogu, the great iroko.

The iroko might have fallen,  
But as its leaves approached the soil,  
Its fruits was scattered for consumption  
Each consumed fruit remembered him forever.

The other trees waved their leaves every minute of existence.  
His leaves were spread around the world in total reminiscence  
Though Ogidi brought forth an iroko and bribed off an iroko.  
This nostalgic memory remains impactful.  
The iroko is dead but its fruits lived forever.



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**Achebe: The Great Son of the Soil**  
**By Bolaji Ajayi**

Let's break the wall of words and  
Weave praises for a priceless sage  
Let's create a path on our tongue  
For nightingales to tread to sing a  
Song for a man stronger than the  
Heels of rocks  
Let the black birds sings the dirge  
While the yellow birds performs the elegy

The treat Achebe  
Let me call you the iroko tree  
Whose value will never diminish  
Let me call you the living stream  
Which purifies the writer's heart

I have carved your face  
On the wall of my heart  
And your name is the force  
that inspires my muse

You are the proverbial man of yesterday  
Whose words has built bridges for the  
Generations yet to come, for even writers  
Of today quench their thirst of words out  
Of your overflowing pot

Let me break kola-nut and offer palm wine  
To appease the gods to release unto me  
A portion of your wisdom to replenish  
My muse



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**An Epistle to Achebe**

*By Chuks Njoku*

Hello Achebe, I write as an emissary to the immortal soul  
Home of peace is turned dead men bones  
Centre of division and bane  
Things have fallen apart again

Marriage is no longer a private affair  
Where ointment of love produces a heir  
Rather sex, divorce and rape grow  
And banns no longer holds

A man of the people to some extent  
Has identified with the stomach and pocket  
Sacrificing eggs at their creation day  
Not even one could stand his own way

The trouble with Nigeria is no more leadership  
Also, religion, racism, and rebel whip  
Revolution is now the people's option  
Since ghouls restrict solution

Girls are at war against a foe  
Humiliation, gender discrimination in Toto  
Feminism alluring to the sense of women  
Like the days of Owu women

The civil pence is meagre, no gain  
Our Husbands have gone mad again  
Mass exodus, raising homes in exile  
Civil strikes cos of situations highly volatile



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The Anthills of the Savannah is now wrecked by corruption  
Occupied by past masters of confusion  
Experts of promises  
Unbeatable men of material forces

The Arrow of god is against the hapless  
Appeased 'against the helpless  
What kind of power was it if never used  
Nature is now abused

Though there was a country, you said  
Whose foundation ne'er laid  
We still ask, Another Africa?  
Africa, Oh! Africa

**C.H.I.N.U.A A.C.H.E.B.E**

*By Adesina Ajala*

**C** —Charisma broke from your soul and perfumed us with the awe of words like freshly worn lavender.

**H** —Hearty and full was the way you sashayed this space with iridescence lacing the edges of wings you swung.

**I** —Incredible with the pen, you wrote yourself onto the shelf of fame of literature with echoing ovations.

**N** —Nobility was sculpted into graffiti in the boulevard of your heart carrying your names in purple themes.

**U** —Uncompromising and stoic, you pricked this nation's conscience with the pin of truth.

**A** —Activism found home in your body, you were the voice-full placard that deafened the corrupt.

**A** —Anthill in the savannah of this land, the brown mound tented on our memories of fires, embers and ashes.

**C** —Champion of African literature, you lighted the way into the world of letters for the Nigerian child and like a child learning to talk, we babble with your name and/or the title of the novel—Chinua Achebe and/or *Things Fall Apart*.

**H** —Haunting was this shadow that finally crawled out of our national bed, how death eased us of this needful torment!

**E** —Exceptional and sizzling like how stories and poems poured from your hands, trickled our mouths and folded our tongues with relish.

**B** —Beacon of inspiration, you spring protégés of the letters to the glitz that can collect in a pen's tube.

**E** —Erudite with the badge of an emeritus pinned to your humble chest and our pens are no longer at ease at this third reminiscence of a man of the people.



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**A Colossus of the East**

*By Chibuko Daniel*

A choro m igwa unu maka Chinualumogu Achebe.  
True son of the soil and ancestral heritage.  
Begotten in the days, times and seasons of men,  
Of his origin the mountains of Ogidi bear witness  
of the path he towed.

Achebe, like a bud, you sprout  
From the land where men and spirit trade  
before our very eyes you grew flourishing  
Like the very vegetation of rain forest.

As down to earth as the dust  
But turning into a gigantic Iroko  
at the very square where men meet.

Achebe, you became the hope  
of the rising sun in the East  
and the clear vision of the blurry mind  
The voice of the numb and the feet of the Lame  
You walked through this path as a colossus  
and as a warrior you were battered and ruptured by wars

Although you stood high like the very hills of UDI hill  
Like a man of the people,  
you held the arrow of the gods in your palm  
So strong to combat evil at the anthills of the Savannah  
where the Biafrans paid the ultimate sacrifice  
before things fell Apart.



Achebe!!!

When we all cried nme nme  
like the he-goat knotted to a stake for long,  
in a political arena of our time  
You rose to the occasion with the trouble with Nigerian  
in the Morning yet on creation.

Achebe!!!

Your journey into the land of men with white melanin  
gave us a boundary at the literary map  
Opened up doors for Okeke and Okafor  
to realize their dreams in distant land.

On the Eve of your departure,  
the sun refused to rise from the East  
On the West, only the furious wind slowed.  
As the metal gong blasts on the pitch of the mountain  
and the sacred sound of the Ikoro heard  
before the cock crowed

A great heralding of the offspring of Chukwu Okike  
to the arena where your memory lies  
Old and young chants in funeral elms  
to the remembrance of the days, times and seasons you spent  
Achebe, although the gods are envious of us  
and to such our time so short .

You lived more than the men before you  
Even though your flesh is dead,  
your name shall live a thousand years more



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**My Own Patriarch**  
*By Onyinye Blessing Okeke*

Half of my existence has been a shadow drop to the memory of a great man, Chinualumogu Albert Achebe. No matter how far I dodge or run from his works I see myself reading them. They are more like prophecies upon us men. His vision of a country, to its falling apart was never doubted as we kept living in fear for being no longer at ease; yet he reminded us the need to hold on to the Arrow of god.

I remember my mother always calling a name of a great novelist while I watched my father always nodding emphatically as he reads the front pages scouting for Chinua's name and prophecy, at interval he pulls off his glasses and thinks as I watch closely. What did I know, being just a little kid? But in the year 2013, March 21st, the cloudy nature of my environment made me realized an Iroko was gone. My father occasionally grabs the paper but he says its originality is missing. My mother takes a deep breath whenever his name is called, "Man of the People is no more," she says.

He was a man who would always emphasize on the customs, traditions and abominations in Igbo Land. In his works we see reincarnation, fertility of our gods and superstition. Here, man toils all day for the fear not to be branded as a "weakling". For the foundation you laid many are following, as we can raise up our heads and say you have reincarnated in most of us. Your works are deep and its originality is our biggest asset.

Man of the people!!! What you left for us is heartily appreciated, as generations to come will not only get exposed to your works and thoughts, but also get exposed to what the Igbo land and Nigeria at large sprouted from.



**A Pen Is A Prophet**

*By Melvis Ugo. C*

When the country bleeds;  
Covered with gore,  
Misery in continuation  
Aftermath of the war.

When the gods came for association,  
With an eye for our resources;  
We received assimilation  
And ourselves, lost focus.

We beseeched brave men  
To step out among us,  
To fight in spirit of humane  
Until we are freed.

Too late we were,  
Left in ashes and murdered by them;  
We were burnt  
By our own selves.

Then came a prophesy;  
Released against us,  
Uttered to make us better;  
If the infants are trained  
Where is 'The Mother And The Child'?

Trainings under his voice,  
His ink and his papers  
Is a 'A Man of The People'  
Whose pen is a weapon.



If we only heed  
To his writings and prophecies,  
We will be healed.

A nation will kiss a bright light  
And Her horizon will stand firm;  
'There Was A Country'  
That bounced off a child's eyes.

Goodnight Achebe.  
Even while you still stand  
As the 'Arrow of God'.



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**Chinua Achebe on Protest Writing**

*By Ifeoma Okafor.*

Chinua Achebe states emphatically that African writers are protest writers. African literature quite naturally is a protest literature, as it is seen as reaction against all forms of injustice. In other words, African writers are always busy with one form of protest or the other, such that they do not have time for frivolities or banality. Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* totally encapsulates some of the formative influences of African literature such as culture contact and conflict, colonialism, imperialism, nationalism and subjugation. Achebe skilfully navigates the story from the native Igbo village of Umuofia which upholds hardwork, appreciates wrestling bouts and the native worship practices to the coming of the white man and its concomitant effect on the Igbo nation.

The literature of Africa used to occur in oral form. Prior to the 20th century, Africans used to hand down chants, drama, myths, riddles, songs, epic, and various kinds of oral tradition in Arabic, Amharic, Swahili, and other African languages from one generation to another. However, written literature of Africa emerged as a reaction against colonialism which happened to be the foremost formative influence on African literature. One of the first written literary works in Africa is *The Interesting Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, the African* (1789), which talks about slavery. As more African countries were colonized by whites, Africans in different parts of Africa started becoming nationalistic. This gave rise to nationalist writing and negritude. African writers became so committed that they started writing extensively to reject the Western Rule. After World War II, they desired to be on their own, make their own laws and govern themselves instead of having white men shave their way of live and religion down their



throats. As Africans began demanding their independence, more African writers were published. In West Africa, Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe, Ousmane Sembene, Kofi Awoono, Agostinho Neto, Tchicaya u tam'si, Camera Laye, Mongo Beti, Ben Okri, and Ferdinand Oyono were published. In East Africa, Ngugi wa Thiongio, Okot p'Bitek, and Jacques Rabémananjara produced poetry, short stories, novels, essays, and plays in European languages replicating same themes, namely, the clash between indigenous and colonial cultures, condemnation of European subjugation, pride in the African past, and hope for the continent's independent future.

Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* which is regarded as one of the first literary works to emerge from Africa was written as a response to Joyce Cary's *Mr. Johnson* which portrays Africans in a very bad light as naive, slow, ignorant and primitive. Achebe urged African writers to restore the dignity of their people, "The writer's duty is to help regain by showing them in human terms what happened to them, what they lost". In Achebe's famous statement in his 1964 Lecture to the Nigerian Library Association "It is inconceivable to me," he says in that Lecture, "that a serious writer could stand aside, or be indifferent to this argument which calls his full humanity in question"

These days however, African writers seem to have forgotten their mandate and instead '*pornify*' African literature for whatever reason, I know not. And this has been a setback to the growth of the African Literature.



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**Achebe**  
**Felix Chibuisi. P**

Achebe,  
You've made your pen a deity  
And have crawled through  
Souls to wake the decayed memory of Okonkwo  
When hunters hunt beyond  
The Ant hills of Savannah,  
Things then are no longer at ease  
And children gallop  
In hope and Impediment.

Achebe,  
Your '*penenclature*' defines  
The might of the gods  
Because the gods are wise.

Achebe,  
You wrote through dark  
To lighten the phase of a new dawn,  
Your crippled legs legged down lane  
To deify the soul Africa.  
Shades of fallen hope hangs  
On the shoulder of your immortal ink,  
Dreams of a new dawn  
Has given the Leopard his claws.

Achebe When the ruffling drum beats incessantly,  
Girls at war see the image of Africa;  
When they retire back home,  
The tales of war battle in the atmosphere.  
Let's drink and owe our ancestors  
Their rites full of libation  
Because we're infants growing  
On the feet of grey hairs  
Without a storyteller to remind us  
That we're the heartbeat of Africa.



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**An Ode to Chinua Achebe (Things Fall Apart)**

*By Fasuyi Tolulope*

Things may fall apart but not a legend  
Go-di-di-go-go-di-go, di-go-go-di-go  
the ekwe sounds till it end  
The python of the sky showed up with its fading bend  
Chinualuamogu Achebe;  
the name roared from an Obi,  
all ears deafened.

Maybe a prophecy from the spirit of Agbala  
He paved way for wordsmiths when he broke the kola  
Ogbuefi Ezeudu was accorded with respect but you are greater  
As Ozo of Umuofia your title in the literary world is higher.

Has he won a hundred hearts?  
He has won hundreds of hundred hearts  
All the clans doff their hat  
A man could not rise beyond his chi but he has played his part.  
Sonorous ogene resonates for a literary god  
Several elephant tusks carved climbing like a gourd  
No speech for the Ogwugwu  
because your works made you demi-god  
There is no one for whom it is well his word from God.



**Acbebe**

*By George Natural Onuorah*

Acbebe!

Indeed you were "a man of the people"  
How your Chi fought for you!

Oh Acbebe!

Even when you were no longer at ease'  
The 'arrow of God' fought your battles  
From the heights of Kilimanjaro  
To the 'anthills of the Savannah'

Oh 'there was a country',

And no, it was not

'Chike and the river' who saw to its demise

Alas 'Girls at War' didn't help matters

'The Education of a British-Protected Child'  
was more important to them!

'Beware soul brother'

their war is caused by 'the trouble with Nigeria'

They have abandoned they wisdom of our forebears,  
replete in 'the African trilogy'

Not even the story of 'how the Leopard got his claws'  
has taught them any moral

Acbebe!

Maybe your 'collected poems'

will teach them to birth 'another Africa'

Maybe, just maybe,

it will be 'morning yet on creation day'

or else 'things fall apart' shall yet be our tale!



Achebe!  
May Chi-nua-lum-ogu!  
Like he did for you  
and maybe we may yet enjoy 'Christmas in Biafra'  
and tell tales of how our forebears thrived at 'Home and Exile'!

Tales of 'hopes and impediments',  
They'd be If only another chance at 'Conversations  
With Chinua Achebe' will ever hold!  
Surely, 'The Drums' and 'The Flute'  
will finally herald 'An Image of Africa'



**Man of The People**

*By Oni Tomiwa*

Man of dust  
Man of dew  
Man of the dry  
Man of wetness. Of the rich  
Of the wretched  
Man of the country  
Man of the cosmologies  
Man of plenitude  
Man of famine. Every of your voices  
Is the whistling of the wind— stuffed.

Man of the cabals  
Man of the masses  
Herald of rain  
  Watcher of drought  
You broke the bulbs  
Then lit your lamp  
You hid the lyre  
Then led the chant  
Every of your word  
Is a drop of bathos— honed.



**I'm No "Longer At Ease"**

*By Chidimma Nwaku*

On the place of marriage as an institution in today's world  
What God has joined together let no man put asunder, the bible  
says

As if you had it in mind when you wrote "marriage is a private  
affair"

So, when the world chose to neglect "the dead man's path"

That was when we knew that "things have fallen apart"

And the centre could not hold.

Just like in a basket full of eggs

One must be the "sacrificial egg"

Marriage was offered up on the altar of sacrilege and disrespect

I will tell you a story

Of a man who let himself be an image of a "vengeful creator"

Despite all pleadings from family

He went ahead to desecrate the institution called marriage

And had "vultures" feast on what is left of his soul

What of the women who joined the gang "girls at war"

Destroying peace in marriage

Heck! Even "civil peace".

I'm no longer at ease, At all!



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## **My Tribute to Chinua Achebe**

*By Ifeoma Isabella Okeke*

Chinua Achebe was born in Eastern Nigeria on November 16th, 1930, and died on the 21th March 2013. Chinua as he was fondly referred to passed on at the age of 82 in London. Chinua dreams of becoming a writer started when he came across a Proverb that says 'until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter'. He became the hunter.

I still can't believe that my favourite author and father has died. It was through his writings that I discovered the many cultures, wars we have in Nigeria. He was a brilliant writer who was critical about our social conditions as Africans writer.

I remember shedding tears after reading 'Things Fall Apart' when I was in J.S.S. I have always wanted to ask him why Okonkwo had to die in that manner. But I didn't know that life is too short. Chinua, you have taught me that every single person in the world can be a writer, as you showed in your writing everyday. You taught me to be willing to take risks. You have taught me that a pat on the back is always better than a slap on the wrist You taught me to be myself and never to give up.

This lesson you have taught me: being a writer, be willing to take risks, be kind and be myself, are lessons that I will continue to do my best to apply in my own writing career. You may be gone but you still live in me. I adore you my father and will try my best to be greater than you.

It is only God who gives and takes. Wherever you are, keep writing even if you're not sure they're being read.

**Adieu Papa: sleep well.**



**From A Grave In Ogidi**

*By Onuorah Valentine Chukwuebuka*

I've known no little more  
Of the Raven's black and Leopard's claw.  
All I seem to know of burning  
Is why the wind keeps turning and turning.

Now, we've lost our path  
And dusk leans on us with her wrath  
A man once knew my heart  
He looked and said things have fallen apart.

Yet, to snatch away my peace  
Is why in using my fist, I do not cease.  
I might be eternally at rest  
But beyond ink, I've desired more conquest  
And I've learnt to turn again  
To see the yellow Sun after the Rain.



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**What a World!**

*By Izunna Okafor*

Tears roll down my cheeks  
Beholding the palm tree i tapped  
From his knowledge of blue ink  
With a bow, lofting off a huge gap  
What a World!

Our Intellectuals have all died  
And the vase of wisdom dried up  
The siege of our dear unbounded hist  
Dusked and whisked away  
In a rueful tomb  
What a World!

In silence has the nature laid hold  
Of the man I cherish so bold  
Parting him behind our physical ears  
And boiling us in the pot of rueful tears  
What a World!

The wave blew aloud like a ruse  
Kidnapping attentions as a tale  
Only to Jail some minds in her rue  
Blinking as sorrows in the eyes of men  
What a world!

We never expected an untimely departure  
But that has reposed our penner in a mellow  
For the time of men is tied to the nature  
And our tears for the dead a show of sorrow  
What a world!



The death has struck deep down our marrow  
And incarcerated us to the jail of sorrow  
We wail not that he was not old  
But beside us lies an empty hole  
Who then will satisfy our thirsty souls?  
Goodbye great man.

**My Eulogy to the Ebullient Scholar**

*By Muoma Valentine Chibueze*

Achebe

A man with divine wisdom  
Divinely inspired by God  
and admired by men  
Ebullient scholar  
Who understood well?  
The language of humanity

Achebe

A man of faith  
Withstanding the hammers of his time  
Unique in his own way  
Doggedly optimistic  
Followed not the crowd  
Pursued dreams and passion

Achebe

A man of valour  
Who stood for justice  
Believed in the principle of equity  
Fairness and integrity  
Detested corruption  
And found love in peace

What else can I say?

Than to bid him farewell  
Follow his footprint  
And hold unto his principle  
Goodbye great scribe  
Goodbye



**Goodbye**

*By Chinonso Okafor*

Your bones and remains  
Maybe no more  
Yet they are fecund  
Though your blood  
May be no more  
It is still red

Where lies the award-winning pen?  
Where rests bookish head?  
Where scattered the star I look up to?  
Where's the living literature himself?

I searched through pages of mortal  
He's nowhere to be found  
I went to your grave  
All alone in search  
Yet

I took thousands to your grave  
At the entrance, in tears we smiled  
For you left your pen here with us  
Each day your voice speaks, undefiled

The Achebe, the soil would forever know  
As a lover of good and a freedom fighter  
The Achebe, the literary world  
Would perpetually mourn

Fear not, for the witty sound  
Of the pen you dropped



Would forever ring  
In the hearts of every mortal

Goodbye, oh  
Man of the people  
The home you built  
The tent of your literary prowess  
Will never fall apart  
In our own time.



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**Ndịda, the Home of the Legend**  
**By Maureen Onyinye Kenneth**

He had a call from Ndịda!  
Yes! That is his homeland  
He created his world with his hand  
Mapped out plans to tighten the bond  
This preached the word of unity  
in the strong community  
He intended to build stability  
With his blessed ability  
The legend lives with us.

As Anwụ rises from Ndịda  
This great hero made agenda  
With the blessings from his father  
As the true son of Idemili  
To change the narratives  
And nurture the thought  
Of creative minds  
To pick up their pens  
To right wrongs  
To book their personal history  
For there was a country

Oh! Beloved man of the Africa Century!  
Ogidi had him as an ivory  
He never dinned with corruption  
Having a cleared vision  
For his nation  
Hereafter his demise  
The legend still lives with us!  
He lives with us  
Though he has gone to repose  
At ndịda  
The legend still lives with us



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## **My Involvement In Immortalizing Him**

*By Odogwu Emeka Odogwu,*

Minutes after the reading begun, I sauntered into Kenneth Dike Library, unruffled by expectations. Scores were already seated. Mine wasn't an issue, as lodged at the extreme, enveloped by drive to learn know and know more.

Seconds later, it was my turn for introduction, which sharply I did, humbled by gurus in the class. I really thanked God I came for the reading, for reading maketh a perfect man, even in Achebe's own generation.

It was a usual monthly gathering of the Society of Young Nigerian Writers (Anambra State Chapter), during which they read and discuss literature, both in the Nigerian and African contexts.

After the usual basics, I heard a term that kidnapped my attention – the **Chinua Achebe Literary Festival**, and that breezed a consummate silence, for we all knew what the name entailed. Furthermore into keen deliberations, I got to understand that the Nigeria's foremost Literary Legend, Late Prof. Chinualumogu Achebe, the great son of Ogidi has actually not been immortalized, despite transcending from this mortal world years ago – 2013. I asked Google, and it replied me same.

Then, I said “Chinua Achebe must be weeping in the grave since, for not having been immortalized yet despite all his great feats before bidding farewell to the literary world.” The only honour he has running in his name is the Chinua Achebe Literary Festival which is annually organized by the young writers. They not only immortalize him through literary programs; but also through regular publication of a collection in his name, called “**Chinua**



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**Achebe Poetry/Essay Anthology**” which they publish annually in honour of the legend, to retain his fingers in the literary field. In other words, the also immortalize him with words  
Seeing what these little ones could do in their own little way, I then concluded I must be involved henceforth in honouring this great legend, from whose pot of wisdom I and my generation have fed over and over again, even still after his departure.

He was a patriot personified and also the father of African Literature. His first novel *Things Fall Apart* (published 1958) is indeed a magnum opus. A lot has been said and heard of him. But the question is: since his demise in 2013, who honours him any longer? Has his own country he made proud even immortalized him? What about his own state? Where are those universities of the world that honoured him alive? Since after his death, how far? Have you all just forgotten in a hurry? What have you done to immortalize him, aside quoting his works which have already immortalized him untold, even when alive? What encouragement does this actually give the upcoming intellectuals – that that their honour ends in their lifetime or flows forever, even behind their rear?

These may seem rhetorical, but are all questions for thought. Indeed, Achebe paid his due to the humanity and to the divinity; and thus actually deserves a perpetual honour running all over through eternity. Play your own part in immortalizing and honouring this great man of the people, to give hope to the upcoming generation. Let us immortalize and honour him. Immortalize him now.



**When You See Achebe**

*By Lekan Malik*

When you see Achebe,  
Tell him that since he had left,  
Things have finally fallen apart  
And the centres can never hold.

When you see Achebe,  
Tell him that the arrow of god  
Is now in the hands of our leaders  
And they shoot it spasmodically.

When you see Achebe,  
Say to him that  
The heart of the nation  
Is no longer at ease.

When you see Achebe,  
Explain to him  
How corruption has risen  
More than the anthills of the savannah.

When you see Achebe,  
Inform him that  
The man of the people  
Is now a man of his stomach and pocket.

When you sight Achebe  
Make it known to him that  
Our girls are still at war



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And the forest refused to vomit them.

When you see our hero, Achebe,  
Tell him that  
Chike and the river  
Are now best of enemies.

When you see Achebe,  
Divulge to him that  
The country he thought it was  
Was never a country at all.

When you finally catch the glimpse of Achebe,  
Show him the picture of Africa  
And he will know for real  
That the image of Africa is blur.



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**Man of Letters**

***By Sam Chukwudi Nwokpoku***

Man of letters  
Son of Ogidi  
Your father named you Chinua  
A priest christened you Albert  
But I call you man of letters  
For the world still feeds on your spicy stories.  
Chinua, man of letters

You were gifted with voice of gong  
Laced and laden with lustre lilt  
of ancient story telling  
Embroidering the African tradition.  
Chinua, man of letters  
You were a patriot:  
You fervently fought for our freedom  
and blatantly criticized the white bastards  
Bastards who came to fart on the face of our  
fatherland  
and murder our motherland.

You told them that black skin is not a disease  
That blacks are also normal humans  
That blacks are not nights  
That blacks are not doomed...  
You came, saw, fought, and conquered.  
Chinua, Man of the People

Today is married to eclipse  
Reminiscence gossips your demise earth-wide  
As we brood nightly, awake.



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But my heart swells with pride  
Remembering your inimitable footprints  
in the world of literature  
And so my poetry rises in chants  
extolling you:  
Man of letters  
Son of Ogidi  
The world still feeds on your spicy stories...



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**In The Memory of Achebe**

*By Ohita Afeisume*

When I gained admission to study at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, one of my dreams was to meet the literary icon, Professor Chinua Achebe.

My foray into the literary world was at the instance of my father, a lover of Shakespeare. He read and quoted often from Shakespeare; introduced me to stories such as *Treasure Island*, *King Solomon's Mines*, and *Gulliver's Travels*. Then I read Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart (TFA)*. I was hooked. The basic human need to hear and tell stories was awakened in me and has remained alive since.

TFA opened my eyes to a story rich and engaging. A classic in its own right, it held me spell bound as I savoured the simple English that flowed from the pen of a ready writer. From this well-told story, I gleaned much knowledge and skills. I felt challenged, inspired. I told myself, "When I grow up, I would craft similar exciting stories."

I was enthralled by the language, the diction of Chinua Achebe. The colourful the way the characters peppered their speech with proverbs. According to Achebe, "Proverbs are the palm oil with which words are eaten."

In TFA, the spirit of brotherhood amongst Africans is portrayed. Each person celebrated his kinsman, related with the extended family in communal living. I found interesting the value placed on names of people and places.

I respect Achebe for being a pioneer in the African literary scene. Pioneers are a rare breed, achievers in virgin fields. Achebe took



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up the daunting task of showcasing Nigeria's, nay Africa's rich heritage. Once, I had a dream to read all the novels in the African Writers' Series of which Achebe is the founding father.

That day came when we freshmen stood outside at Ansa Building to catch a glimpse of this man as he taught Fiction to third year students. Were we awed! We made way as the solemn-faced man who bestrode the literary world like a colossus walked out. I guess not a few of us had goose flesh at that moment. We had looked forward to drinking from this fountain of Literature. Lo and behold! When it reached our class turn, he had retired from the university.

My Sri Lankan friend, Medha de Alwis who studied in India and has lived in the UK too once told me that she hated carrying stuff with her as she moved countries. She would leave behind or even give away her prized possessions. However, she admitted that TFA is one item she has always carried with her, because according to her, "I would kill for Achebe." I felt proud to be a Nigerian.

Achebe wrote, combining his imagination, oral tradition plus reading (research) and penned TFA. Today, we have a legacy of written History and Literature. Globally, there are people who would give their right hand to meet Chinua Achebe. Nigerians are honoured to have had him. Indeed, we still have him as we commemorate him.



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**The African Treasure**  
*By Nwobi Chidubem Valentine*

The only tree that made-up the forest  
The tree that sheltered mother Africa  
"Things fall Apart" made Igbo race famous  
You have a desire to write/paint all day  
Toxic lines from which ink flows  
Exuding pretty image of African World  
The hurting voice speaking against racism  
Free to see, pouring out his heavy heart

Gone from us but leaving memories  
Death can never take away,  
Your legacy that lingers upon the earth  
When your demise made us sad  
Memories of you gave us reason to smile  
I wish I could tell you not to go  
But you departed years ago  
The pride of African literature  
Life can be same after loss of a trinket  
But never, after the loss of a Treasure



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**The Written Lives Forever**

*Paul Abiola Oku-ola*

Pen called, he heeded,  
Paper requested, he answered,  
Words made their tents on his wrist.  
Though with the angels he now dwells,  
The written still lives forever.

In his hands,  
The pen and paper had a beautiful romance  
From his wrist,  
Words fell like dew at dawn,  
rays of the sun at noon,  
or the lullabies of the crickets  
When the moon and the stars light up the night  
Though with the angels he now dwells  
The written still lives forever.

Humanity lacked it.  
Heaven bestowed it,  
And it flowed through him,  
And from him  
Though with the angels he now dwells,  
The written still lives forever.



**Chinua Achebe: The Today Without Yesterday**

*By Chuks Njoku*

"Writing is like wrestling; you are wrestling with ideas and with the story. There is a lot of energy required. At the same time, it is exciting. So it is both difficult and easy. What you must accept is that you're not going to be the same while you are writing..." One man has dedicated himself to wrestle with ideas and with the story of humans. Exhausting vigour mirrors the society, declaring the realities behind the scene. Chinua Achebe is the hero, legend, cultural flutist, optimistic iconoclast and a literary icon. Life is a stage of experience. "We live in a society that is in transition from oral to written". Chinua Achebe, an unforgettable literary figure set the agenda and told the stories from an unpredictable angle of narration. In his view of the world as a mask dancing, he took different positions in studying the society.

Culture is the common hope of the people. When cultural-subversion took over, the literary wrestler set the pace for an unadulterated one.

However, things fall apart when the original was exchanged with the counterfeit." He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart". It takes a man who knows how to handle the pen to overpower the effectiveness of the knife (sword). Beyond Africa, he was a man of the people whose black pen screeches the value and quality of black on the white paper. As a flutist of African personality, he understood the sounds in different climes and seasons. Beyond sentiments, his utterances were truth-bound and void of imaginations. Nevertheless, when things fall apart, never doubt a man fighting for his right. He who fails to learn from history will unavoidably repeat it. We saw him, read about him and his works, and his impacts yesterday, yet his realities exist till today.



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Through the work of his hands, he showed us the need to know our yesterday for our today; a compendium of innovation, awards, prestige, history, literary Pentateuch, education, politics, African emancipation and Negritude.

Chinua Achebe, a man whose proficiency in the art of writing has elevated and solved facets of societal trauma is beyond natural. His impacts left indelible marks on the green nation, lovers of literature, Africa and the globe .Our today cannot do without the yesterday of Chinua Achebe.

**Deep Down Achebe's Tomb**  
*By Felix Chibuisi. P.*

Deep down his grave,  
echoes his voice.  
I can *nose* the odour of a decaying pen;  
I can *ear* the wailing and groaning of a bleeding  
pen,  
As he says;  
"Resurrect my pen not me".  
Deep down his grave,  
His voice echoes:  
"No Longer At Ease.  
For under the hills of Africa,  
The Ant Hills of the Savannah seek peace".  
Africa!

A home to speak in pages of history,  
Bedrock of culture and civilization;  
Ancient homes of artisans.  
Sailing across the Atlantic,  
Achebe taught the white man English.  
Underneath his beards unseen,  
Hang follicles of wisdom.  
See through his pen and free yourself,  
Africa, oh Africa!

Things Fall Apart  
But they claim to hold the-centre.  
Enslavement is your pride,  
Africa, oh Africa!  
See again through his unseen beards,  
And see your culture hanging on the fence,



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Fence of uncertainty,  
As Okonkwo is sacrificing again,  
He, who calls him father.

Deep down the tomb of Achebe,  
Groaning of culture mourns.  
On your plains, oh Africa!  
Professor Chandus' mouth leaks promises:  
Til solve all your problems'.  
I can hear his voice saying,  
There Was a Country,  
Where the Arrow of God  
killed A Man of the People.

Down deep in his tomb,  
Achebe's voice echoes:  
"Resurrect my pen, not me,  
For my culture is buried in pages of books,  
Why then are these 'Girls at War'  
Where are the 'Refugee Mother And Child'  
Can't you *ear* his voice?  
Can't you *eye* his broken body of culture?  
Can't you *nose* his decaying pen?  
Can't you *leg* his now feeble moves  
Beyond dead men's path  
Beware, soul-brother,  
of another Africa.



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## **The Missing Line**

**By Afariogun Ibrahim Abolore**

Late Prof Chinua Achebe works, speeches and writing have a great impact in the world. He has left an indelible footprint. Few of his great books and speeches are as follow:

### **1. Things Fall Apart**

By 1957, he had sculpted it to his liking, and took advantage of an advertisement offering a typing service. He sent his only copy of his handwritten manuscript (along with the £22 fee) to the London company. After he waited several months without receiving any communication from the typing service, Achebe began to worry. The book, in recognition of its universality, appears in the Bokklubben World Library collection "proposed by one hundred writers from fifty-four different countries, compiled and organized in 2002 by the Norwegian Book Club. This list endeavors to reflect world literature, with books from all countries, cultures, and time periods."

Nigerian Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka has described the work as "the first novel in English which spoke from the interior of the African character, rather than portraying the African as an exotic, as the white man would see him."

### **2. No Longer At Ease And Fellowship Travels**

In 1960, while they were still dating, Achebe dedicated to Christie Okoli his second novel titled "No Longer at Ease", which talks about a civil servant who is embroiled in the corruption of Lagos. The protagonist is Obi, grandson of Things Fall Apart's main character, Okonkwo. He is crushed by these forces (like his grandfather before him) and finds himself imprisoned for bribery. Having shown his acumen for portraying traditional Igbo culture, Achebe demonstrated in his second novel an ability to depict



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modern Nigerian life. This ability makes people to call him “the father of modern African Literature” and Africa's greatest storyteller and many books and essays have been written about his work over the past fifty years. In 1992 he became the first living writer to be represented in the Everyman's Library collection published by Alfred A. Knopf.

Achebe provided a "blueprint" for African writers of succeeding generations. In 1982, he was awarded an honorary degree from the University of Kent. At the ceremony, Professor Robert Gibson said that the Nigerian Writer "is now revered as Master by the younger generation of African Writers and it is to him they regularly turn for counsel and inspiration.

He was giving 30 honorary degrees from universities in England, Scotland, Canada, South Africa, Nigeria and the United States, including Dartmouth College, Harvard, and Brown University.[2003] He was awarded the Commonwealth Poetry Prize, an Honorary Fellowship of the American Academy of Arts and Letters (1982), [2008] a Foreign Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (2002), [2009] the Nigerian National Order of Merit (Nigeria's highest honour for academic work), the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade,[2010] the Man Booker International Prize 2007, the 2010 Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize. He was appointed Goodwill Ambassador to the United Nations Population Fund in 1999



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**Achebe's True Voice**  
***By Christopher Calvin***

Integrity has always been blind  
No way it ever sinks in delusion  
The measure of the power of human  
The strongest sanctuary on nature belief

When popularity of others has been agony  
Inside we are just too weak to fly  
Scared of broken wings before we look up to  
the sky  
Your powerful words remind each of our ways  
as self-story  
The legacy you left is beyond extraordinary  
Brings all of us to rebirth the rite  
As to simplify us closer and closer  
Flashback transition is what we are here for



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**Our Story in His-Story**  
*By Agholor Henry Nduka*

Born in Ogidi like a silent king  
Corn in agidi form serves as his meal  
Worn the garment of words like beads  
Our story in his-story

Growing up in the custom of the old  
Crowing the tradition of ndi umu Chukwu Okike  
Throwing in the believe in Aro belief  
Our story in his-story

Schooled in Literature instead of Medicine  
Stringed words to fight white colonialists  
Salvaged his people from slavery  
Our story in his-story

At Boston he breathe his last  
A piston in the hollow past  
A python crawled fast on the rock with marks  
Our story in his-story

Things are no longer at ease  
Things are now falling apart  
But things are now like once upon a time  
there was a country  
Our story in his-story

The fate of the unknown is bright  
The hate in the polity is clear  
The gates of secession is open  
Our story in his-story



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**Pieces Of A Famous Man.**

*By Nwosu Faith*

Sitting at the back of the auditorium,  
I watched the eyes that kept looking up  
The voice came steadily and mild  
As he menstruated knowledge in its seat of wisdom  
For the few that ever heard of Achebe  
Know him from the stories he told  
And the life he led  
He's a leader who fought each day  
His words brought the lessons  
"man must always rustle with the spirit he does not  
want to live with"  
in a world where the spirits are quick to let loose  
A story was told of a story teller  
Achebe  
Who believed the god's where not to be blamed  
For the sins of the fathers  
And he dropped the word  
If you keep on blaming your ancestors  
Be ready to become a blamed ancestor  
He knew the future belonged to those who played  
with sand  
And soiled their clothes with oil  
Along the paths that men crossed  
Amongst the sperms that formed them all  
From the many wombs that could beget them  
He lifted many virtues  
Whenever he dropped his pen  
Chinua gave his body and his soul  
I feared a world without him  
Let the seat of Wisdom be his Legacy



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For our next generation will believe our present  
hope  
That finally we have found joy  
Realizing why fate gave us all but him  
Only famous men leave.



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**Achebe the Wordsmith**

*By Ezinne Anekwe*

History gives an account of a people's past;  
literature does the same,  
but with a tapestry of words,  
raises eyebrows and releases a watchdog.

You never produced a languid fiction  
your imaginations each time clashing with reality.  
In the least obscure manner  
you made the world know our past and esteemed culture.

Sometimes I read you with goose pimples –  
your complex revelations  
your polite social consciousness  
and humorous interludes.  
Indeed a man with details should be feared.

You rose above the British colonial predicament  
and wrote in the language of William Shakespeare,  
Geoffrey Chaucer, Jane Austen, Oscar Wilde,  
P.B Shelley, W.B Yeats, Charles Dickens, S.T. Coleridge,  
George Eliot among others  
just to ensure we hear all the stories.  
You conquered with words.

Armed with your fine intellectual disposition  
your works stare a lion in the eye.  
The buzz of "There was a Country" still lingers, still warns.  
Who knows what would have become of Nigeria  
without those warnings.

You are the true ambassador,  
a humanist, a protest writer,  
unbiased and unrepentant in social consciousness,  
a citadel of creativity.  
My generation is in dire need of another like you.



**Achebe: A Hero**

*By Abdulrahman Conteh*

Father of the modern Africa literature  
A unique user of pastiche  
Like redolent his writing blossoms  
And sempiternal stays

He was the incipient  
Incipient of Africa literature modernism  
He was the light  
As it brighten up till date

Bucolic he was in love with  
While writing  
Conflating culture, moral  
And that of social

A true hero and leader  
Illuminating community values  
In the content  
And form of storytelling

Margaret Atwood once called him  
A magical writer  
Tom Morrison (Nobel Laurent) once said  
"He inspired me to become a writer"

What will I say?  
But a stupendous display of knowledge  
And creativity  
My very own mentor and role model



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Like the epiphany is his writing  
Like flower when it blossom  
Fetching full with  
With nature of glamour

The foundation stone he lay  
For generations to build and improve  
Unique legacy he left behind  
For generations to follow



**Passenger**

*By Akinwale Peace Akindayo*

The sun withdraws its yellow eye  
And you gave in slowly to a  
New dawn of old parturition;  
It has been known  
When man closes his last eye,  
He has kicked the bucket.

His Black Soul, who was his black boy  
Has lived on this hill of shedding rocks  
And our soul has left us, when he died.  
Were we not to live as memories?  
We're pilgrims in the credo of living.

What essence does he speak, if not  
from him?  
We have barrels of wine  
And our cups are swept by the wind,  
Yet we drink all our passion and  
Hold our knuckles against our fist.

Was it not here, that things fall part?  
And we close both eyes, to see his eye  
And we think of thought, and what's left.  
Is it not unwell, that while we  
Entrust ourselves here, we're pilgrims?

Beloved, wander as the cloud  
Even at its silent rumble.  
The constellation is in our palm,  
Are we not the Black Boys he left?  
Life rests not in shroud, but its breath.



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You're gone inner and outer, gone.  
No moon, no ground, no sky, no you.  
And we are not close to be far;  
For, we're the shadow of your books  
And the murmuring of dry dust.

If the cage is kept, is the bird  
Of his lips rent, or his wings plucked  
As bitter fruits?  
Sweetness, is it not in struggle,  
As you did for us?  
Is it not in the drunkenness  
Of the wetting mud? It is seen  
In the smooth weft of looming clouds  
And the emptiness of rain in  
A pregnant cloud.  
Yet, is it not this life that you've lived,  
that we'll live.



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## A Thesis on Chinua Achebe's "Things Fall Apart"

By *Oghenero Genza*

Chinua Achebe belongs to the prestigious class of men who were born to be a blessing to the world. Born to Igbo parents in Ogidi, a town in present day South-East, Nigeria, Chinua studied at the University College, Ibadan. In 1958, he published his first novel - ***Things Fall Apart*** which will become a talk of the world for as long as the world exists. In this work the genius of an author takes a backward dive into history. How Africans coped before the intrusion of the Whiteman is the talk of part one of the novel.

Prior to works like ***Things Fall Apart***, the history of Africa had actually been written by Westerners. This was because early Africans did not write on paper. The manner in which Africans kept records of events and their history was majorly through folklore, which passed from generation to generation. Other means were songs and proverbs; and in the Great Benin Kingdom, history was recorded using artefacts.

Well, the Westerners who invaded Africa claimed, in their own version of Africa's history, that early Africans lived in total anarchy hence they, the Westerners, established governmental institutions for Africans. However, the truth was that the early Africans were living in harmony under their own system of government which they understood and the white men came to destroy this system which led to anarchy among Africans.

Although the white men forced their own system on Africans, Africans could not comprehend it because it was alien to them; hence, it did not work. Chinua sought to correct such misnomer in his novel ***Things Fall Apart***. In the story, Chinua tells us how the people of Umuofia, an Igbo village, settle disputes among



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themselves using the Ogwugwu system, simply because the white men had not founded a court of law or a police station in Umuofia they claim the people are living in anarchy. But that is false. Umuofia has laws that govern the people. These laws are not written, yet any fool knows them. There are punishments for breaking these laws and appeasements too. Every idiot knows that the first day of the week is Market Day and each week consists of four days, although it is not written anywhere. Chinua also talks about the sport competitions that existed in Africa then, the major sport being wrestling. Okonkwo first made a name for himself when he defeated Amalinze the cat in a much talked about wrestling match. Chinua does not also fail to question some practices of our forefathers. For instance, he uses his character Nwoye to question the humanity behind abandoning babies to die simply because they are born twins.

Chinua has described a typical Igbo village before white men intruded. The practice did not vary much among African communities. In my humble opinion Chinua Achebe deserves the Nobel Prize in Literature.



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**Chinua Achebe: The Literary Icon and Celebrated Moralist.**

*By Marcel Ike Okonkwo*

My life is dedicated to every fibre of greatness, every breath of it; so I live a cosmic life. I don't interfere but when someone passes and moves on, I always look at what they stood for in my life and what they taught me when they were here.

So, as to Prof. Chinua Achebe, this is what he stood for: Revolution, Greatness, Change, Fearlessness, Valour, Creativity, Genius, Freedom, Art, Soul, Entrepreneurship, Dedication and Individuality.

Sir, with every strand of my DNA, I bow in honour to you, for what you were, what you are and what you will forever be, An epic Man of Posture! Pure pioneer and legend of this lifetime! I will in all things in this lifetime do my part to resemble the integrity, the dignity, the honour, the mastery, the discipline and the culture that your very large feet have paved for us!

I honour you Sir and you will never be forgotten! Today we honour you the immaculate elder - Prof. Chinua Achebe. We honour and love you deeply for you are the conception of greatness and goodness. And may discipline, dignity, honour and class follow your name because that is your representation! Father of the African Literature, black people all over the world owe you an un-payable debt of gratitude and our profound thanks. What great a man whom we were truly given as a gift to be forever remembered.

As long as rivers shall run down sea, or shadows touch the mountain slopes, or stars gaze on the vault of heaven; so shall we continue to give thanks for your essence which consecrates our days? Your heart and works were tied to the ultimate good, and out of them flow rivers of living water. Nothing inspires us lately



like you do. Your written words always instruct our heart. Chinua Achebe, you were an ordinary man whose lifetime on earth proved extraordinary for all mankind. We love you Sir and we thank you for the imprint which you left so deeply in our lives. Life is ephemeral and yours was full of legendary legacies. You were a great light to the people, a great teacher who taught with his life and touched many lives through his mighty pen. We forever bow to you. Hero of Africa! Indeed, you worth celebrating.



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## **Chinua Achebe: The Mouthpiece of Biafra**

*By Asogwa Jude Ikechukwa*

Chinua Achebe was the mouthpiece of Biafra. This is on account of the fact that he communicated the Igbo culture to the world, condemned openly corruption in Igbo land and told the world about Biafra. The way Igbos live was encapsulated in Chinua Achebe's debut novel titled *Things Fall Apart*. The novel was meant to assert African culture to non-Africans and buttress non-superiority of the Whites over the Blacks. The novel was said to have been translated into Forty-five languages across different countries of the world. If this is so, then it was even more appropriate to say that Igbo culture is the most popular culture in Africa.

Furthermore, his love for his homeland obligated him to condemn openly corruption at home. It was for this cause that he rejected Nigerian National Award on two different occasions. On his second time rejection of the award, he had to issue a statement to the Nigerian-press saying: *"I have watched particularly the chaos in my own state of Anambra where a small clique of renegades, boasting its connections in high places, seems determined to turn my homeland into a bankrupt and lawless fiefdom. I am appalled by the brazenness of this clique and the silence, if not connivance, of the presidency"*. Another instance was when he revealed one of his startling experiences in Enugu, in his work known as *"The Trouble with Nigeria"*. It happened that a police constable had to whip every driver that disregarded the traffic rule, and then a tinted-glassed dark jeep also defaulted.

The constable had raised his right hand to whip when he discovered that a police Inspector and a Justice were sitting behind, he then quickly lowered the whipping hand and saluted



with the left. Achebe believed in Biafra and told the Biafran story. At the verge of the Nigerian Civil War, he had to leave his job at the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation in Lagos and returned to the southeast. He became then the Biafra's International Envoy promoting the cause in Canada, Europe and Senegal, In addition when his end was near, he gave us *"There Was A Country"* (his personal history of Biafra) which was more than a mere story book.

It was a first-hand, authentic and reliable Biafran history. It was also a medium through which the present and future generation, both Biafrans and non-Biafrans will know Biafra.

In conclusion, Chinua Achebe, the man who gave Igbo culture a rank in Africa, a patriotic

Biafran and the fearless press of Biafra is the mouth piece of Biafra. Indeed, through him, Biafra lives forever.



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**Leave To Be Remembered - My Unsaid Words**  
*By Ifeoma Isabella Okeke*

Because I have seen life, I shall have no sorrow  
to die.

I have set up my gladness on books,  
To be read across the nations  
I have written in the rain during Christmas in  
Biafra.

I have shown the world my tears,  
Even when I knew I was no longer at ease.

Because I have seen life, I shall have no sorrow  
to die.

I have kissed my loved ones on the lips and  
cried with them,  
When I heard there was a country,  
I have to endure the pains to the end.  
I have struck my palm like glue  
In the loyal hands of a friend,  
I have seen darkness and risen alive out of hell.  
I have known the Peace of Heaven,  
And the comfort of a good story that is well  
written

Even before the arrow of God came.  
Because I have seen life  
I shall have no sorrow to die.  
I gave a share of my soul to the world through books.  
When things fall apart  
I know that another shall rise to finish the task,  
I surely must leave.  
I know that I walk through hell to be on the path I trod.

As one looks on a face through the window,  
Through life' I have looked on God.

Because I am a man of the people  
As I walk through the rainbow,  
To the other-side of life,  
I leave to be remembered.  
I will keep on writing even if am not  
sure they are being read.  
Because I have seen life,  
I shall have no sorrow to die  
Goodbye fellow Writers  
For I am through with my unsaid words.



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**Just Like the Palm Tree**

*By Stanley Ezechukwu*

An un-debatable truth it is that all parts of the palm tree serve a variety of purpose in our daily living; Chinua Achebe could be portrayed as a palm tree budded in Nigeria and exported to the world because of his unquantifiable and immeasurable impact in the annals of literature. Just like the woody trunk serves for firewood,

Achebe had ignited the Africa's profile in the literary world. Just like the fronds are for baskets and mats weaving, Achebe had weaved our culture and history into words that stand the test of time for generations to come. Just like the fleshy fruits are pound and wrung to provide oil for roasted yam and plantain, Achebe had wrung out solutions to problems that have plagued our political system. Just like the kernels are put into soap making, Achebe had cleansed the darkened hearts of the Whiteman's' perspective of the blacks. Just like the roots are put into medicinal uses, Achebe had healed the once broken hearts of a disturbed society.

The terminal bud constitutes the heart of the tree and when removed, it dies. However, Achebe imprinted an indelible mark on the sands of time that in our hearts, he lives on, remains evergreen just like the leaves of the palm tree.



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**Chinua Achebe: A Man of the People.**

*By Chizoba Ngwudo*

I know a man of the people!  
Chinualumogu Achebe was his name.  
That fighting spirit!  
A man on a mission,  
He fought corruption,  
And opposed oppression of his people.

He saw that things would fall apart  
Long before the white men came to tear us apart.  
A hero fell to ground zero,  
But then, what he didn't say was that  
Things fall apart  
For better things to fall in place!

And now the people are no longer at ease,  
Because the government do as they please.  
With corruption as the order of the day  
There's nothing left to take home from your pay  
Our fathers fought for this independence  
Yet sons fight to repeal its sentence.

Perhaps what we need is an Arrow of God  
When we can't be saved by the gods  
To direct us to where secrets are hidden  
So that mysteries can be unravelled and solution  
found  
To dodge further shedding of blood  
That we may not be consumed by this tragedy.



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Remember the Anthills of the Savannah  
Lest we land unloved and un-mourned on the  
rubbish heap  
Before we realize that power doesn't belong to  
the dictator  
But even in the regime of tension and  
assassination  
The pen will always be mightier than the gun.  
Let us go to the ants and be wise!

Therefore, Beware, Soul Brother!  
For we do not want another Refugee Mother  
and Child  
Lest there be Girls at War  
With Hearts of Darkness.

Ignore the Trouble with Nigeria  
To avoid the tales of When There was a  
country  
Being told to Chike and the River.



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**The Shock of His Death**

*By Stanley Mata*

I knew there was a crack on the walls  
Which the cobwebs cannot re-join  
I knew the calabash has shattered  
The pieces of which cannot be gummed

Chai! The Iroko tree has fallen  
And the birds are now on the run  
Okonkwo has committed a murder  
He has fallen Omaliko the cat.

Obi has travelled to London  
Things have fallen apart  
Chike is now drowned by the river  
Things are no longer at ease

Ọnwa arachaa mmanụ  
Okpu ọbara ọbara eju ala  
Nwoke ike alaa mmụọ  
Agwọ nọzịkwa n'akịrịka

Who is now the Man of the People?  
As ethnicity befriends corruption  
Where is Ezulu?  
I see the Arrow of God

Where are the suckers that'll grow  
When the mother plant is gone?  
Ants are now on the hill  
And their Savannah is yet to stand

Achebe is dead but living  
His sleep is yet shock  
When a great man sleeps  
The world will hear his snore



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*2016 Collections*

**The Pathfinder Resumes**

*By Isidore Emeka Uzoatu.*

These lines go to a man of peace  
Born in a time of strife  
Who thought about things  
When the rest are blown away  
On the wings of its tidings

He knew me not  
Though we practice same art  
Sharing same birthday decades apart  
In the many tribes littering the Lower Niger  
Pacified by civilizing missions that denied us a past.

He housebroke the novel form  
Setting it on Grandpa's hearth  
Till character, plot, scene, et al  
Shedding alien demeanours  
Dressed down to raffia skirts.

In leap of prosaic prognosis  
He killed protagonist in magnum opus  
Poignant pointer to our only way forward  
We that survive on cowering cowardice  
Or escutcheons are emblazoned with blame.

Long afore battle lines are dreamt, nay drawn.  
As disdainful as prophecy is in own domain  
Permit this antithesis off a sycophant pen  
As you join the ancestors triumphant  
To find us another path to the trove of words...



**Okonkwo**

*By John Chizoba Vincent*

When are you coming back home?  
Where is your machete and dagger?  
Have they all fallen to sleep again?  
Have you forgotten us, who we are?  
Shall things continue to fall apart?

Igbos are in mess again with their souls!  
They have no share again in the land!  
When hardship dance in our thatched  
heads, we were no longer at ease here;  
as hardships erupt we hang our heads.

Is there no more Okonkwo in the land?  
Is there no more a gallant man of Biafra?  
Is there no more Chinua's Okonkwo here  
to dry those written pains and sorrow?  
We all asked amidst tears that kill soul.

With the arrow of the gods of our ancestors,  
we stand to fight and to fight like heroes,  
So let love stand between us that defend!  
We are nothing more to this land  
than a broken plate that they can trampled upon.

Okonkwo, when are you coming home?  
When are we fighting the whites again?  
Between the anthills of the savannah,  
we wait voiceless for your return home!  
Okonkwo, there are scars in our hearts.

Our lips may hold our anger to rust daily  
But we have a written path upon our palms that  
Biafra may not die again  
but rejects death and live beyond the orbit of this land.  
We're re-writing the past as we wait on you  
Okonkwo.



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**Achebe the Silent Parrot**  
**By ChuksNjoku.**

There are times when a race rich in size, giant in possessions, mighty in strength, clothed in virtue, is lost in civilization, history, identity, hope and self-confidence; but one man through the work of pen and paper gives hope to them.

When things fall apart, never doubt a man righting for anything he deserved: African enlightenment and heritage. When things fall apart, only the selfless can hold on. The pen they say is mightier than the sword.

But who will tell the truth? They are few and we know them. Like a parrot wagging its tail, scattering the flies of African subversion. A man of the people ever punished to have used an unknown tongue to request for soap. Who will tell them about our food, ceremonies, traditions, taboos, deities, artefacts? Yet, no longer at ease, you shot an arrow of GOD (Guaranty our Dignity) on top of the anthills of the Savannah – the arrow that escaped the bow of the gods and avenged the ruled against despotic ruler. Oh! How time flies. Yesterday, he fed me directly from his mouth. Today, I feed from his hands; which die not. Who is this Hero? His name, not available in war victors, yet he's a gladiator! His diction, so pure and demystified, yet he mirrors the society unharmed! Not Christopher Columbus, a sailor and discoverer, yet he declared that there was a country. Well spent years on earth, but books lasting much longer – winner of Man Booker International Prize 2007 and Father of African Literature.

You were a mother parrot, giving birth to other parrots whose claws leave marks on the earth. As a silent parrot, mouth full of golden wisdom and the hands as an ant, painting in all season. Your blood ceases not to flow through the veins and capillaries of Africa and beyond. Ever strengthening the bones and ligaments of Nigeria and bring her to be called the Giant of Africa and El-Dorado of talents and innovations.



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**Chinua Achebe: The Genius with A Pen.**

***By Ifeanyi Enoch Onuoha.***

A society without writers is in darkness for writers are lighters and via their works, they enlighten minds. A writer is a thought leader, cornucopia of knowledge, trend setter and change agent. Writing is a noble profession.

Nigeria is blessed to have a great writer in the person of Chinualumogu Albert Achebe, an illustrious son of Ogidi in Anambra State. Achebe is among the foremost writers that gave a global voice to the Igbo people and Nigeria. He is truly a genius with pen for his works are easy to read but hard to forget. His writing style is unique.

Chinua Achebe is not dead, for great souls do not die; they simply transit to eternal glory where they enjoy bliss. Through his creative products, he bequeathed to us timeless values and principles. He is an immortal for generations will keep sourcing his sagacity in order to better their lives.

Professor Chinua Achebe lived a purpose-driven life by using his time and resources to impact lives. As a tutor, many of the people he taught are today giants in different walks of life. What greater honour than the fact that a man contributed to the success of other humans.

As a genius with a pen, he wrote enthralling poems, prose, essays, books, et cetera. He was a man of integrity and full of confidence that never allowed the corruption wind blowing in Nigeria to mess him up. He made us proud both at home and on the global playing field that Africa and the world history of literature will not be complete without mentioning his name.

Professor Chinua Achebe was a true writer and statesman. As he departed from mother earth, he handed the pen to we young writers to continue doing good from where he stopped. Together, we promise to unleash our geniuses and positively rewrite the conversations about our fatherland.



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**The Word War Lord**  
*By Udeh Ibiam Ufiem*

Yesterday you said goodbye  
To the game of words and art  
Having penned the prison words on our walls-unseen

Today our walls are taken away,  
We are no more forgotten and our  
Jerichos have fallen  
Because your cannon voice  
was heard in five market squares.

Chinua,  
Your prophecies have come to pass  
for you were a prophet  
a prophet sent to a people  
a people living in chains on  
their minds and necks.

Chinua,  
Your strong prophecies freed them.  
Today you sleep from us  
Having justified your pen  
the art for which you were born  
Having justified \our muse  
Here we are to commit your art  
forever to the-gods of the grave  
as we retire to our sheets in flutes  
to release favourite tunes for you  
Hymns of continuity.  
Sleep on  
Our Word War Lord.



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**Chinua Achebe Lives On**  
**By Umebei Ndubuisi**

The demise of Professor Chinualumogu Achebe who was one of Nigeria's erudite scholars caused a standstill in the world. He was respected worldwide for his renowned intellectual disposition, literary prowess, and life of honour and activity.

As news of his death reached out, sighs of grief and gasps of pain echoed all over the country, Africa and the world at large regardless of tribe, religion, race and ethnicity. Our solace is in the fact that he bequeathed to us worthy legacies.

Nigerians and indeed Africans are proud to have man who used his literary works to uphold and 'sell' Nigerian culture to the world rightly, and to promote peace and unity in the country.

Achebe has written a definitive assessment of contemporary issues in Nigeria in lucid and engaging prose and poems. Humanly, we could not have Achebe forever; it is not given to any man to be. Although death is inevitable, in the annals of literary history of Nigeria, Africa and the world, and in our hearts, Achebe lives forever.

At 82, he could not be said to have died young. However, going by the records of his achievements in his lifetime and the bold indelible mark he has etched on our collective history, he is still.

For us, this is a moment of sober reflection and potent challenge, a cause for personal commitment and renewal. Achebe is a true success; posterity will remember him as a great man.

The legacies he left are indelible on the sands of time, he affected lives for good, and he infused courage in the mind of the timid and restored the hope to the disillusioned.

The Igbo people are proud of him. He was a profound source of inspiration to our generation, and our generation is better because he unleashed his greatness and lived a life worthy of emulation.

Is your life worthy of emulation.....?



**Good Night.**

**By Paul Abiola Oku-Ola**

My pen refused to write  
Even after doing everything right  
And going down to plead  
Still it refused to give heed

'Let me lie  
That I might be with him on high  
Let me journey with the soul  
Who made for us a gorgeous stole  
Chinua is gone  
Why must I live on?'

But I beseech you o pen  
Listen before you part from men  
Hold your breath  
Hear me before you robe death

Chinua is dead  
But his course loss not its head  
His legacies abound  
Though he dwells beyond  
His did his part  
Before things fell apart  
He is gone  
But his pen lives on  
Rest in peace Achebe  
Till we meet at the glorious day  
Good night



**Dimples of Freedom**

*By Mbizo Chirasha*

Dimples of mighty river donga, river  
Sokoto flowing honey of liberation, dripping  
sweetness of decades  
Of freedom harvest  
Taraba and ekuku flowing with seasons coming  
after one another  
Winters in tears and summers in blood

Dimples of freedom sing freedom  
Freedom of the people, people and their song  
The resonance of rhythm,  
rhythm of drumbeat throbbing  
Rhythm throbbing under the feet of mothers and  
children pounding this earth sodden in oil and  
hope.

Dimples of freedom  
You age with generations like baobab  
The essence of villages and the resonance of  
tribes  
Tribes singing embracing the dimples of silver  
moon  
Singing one tune, in one tongue, sing boki  
mothers, rise mbumbe sisters  
Sing bachere songs, dance the gavako dance  
Dimples of freedom  
you age with generations like banana trees  
Kings of this land, i sing of you  
My song of bones, shadows, stones, mist and  
Smoke



Dimples of freedom  
I sing of kings whose skin glow after the caress  
of coco butter  
Their breath smelling the milk of coconut  
I sing with Modibo of Gombe, Obong of  
Obioko, Olu of Warri  
I sing of you Laban Lamido Oba of Lagos  
Dimples of freedom smile with Olo of the Olowo

Dimples of freedom  
Smelling decades of light and stink  
Enduring decades of nights and hope  
Sleeping in decades of nightmares and dreams  
Your stomachs vomiting the sun of liberation.  
liberation  
That crocodiles and reptiles be pregnant with the  
sun of liberation and  
The moon of freedom

Dimples of freedom  
This is my succulent watermelon of metaphors  
to the land whose heart is Velvet and whose soul  
is a grain of wheat

Dimples of freedom,  
sing with me, the song of  
freedom,  
Sing Bello, sing Azikiwe,  
Sing Awolowo, sing Shehu  
Song of the people,  
The people and their song.



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**Hero of Africa**

***By Aisha Aminu Bello***

There was a hero  
Whose legacy still remains  
His art a mirror  
Reflecting life and its ugly domains

He has crossed over pages  
Conquering with words  
Unlocking cages  
Saving Africa from her landlords

With a mighty pen he fought  
The war of ignorant thoughts  
Brave heart of Africa  
Hero of Africa!



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**Chinua Achebe: A Man**

*By Nwanne Agwu*

You

Are a man, who made Africa

A happy continent

You

Are a man, who made us

A proud generation

You

Are a man, from the olden times

Of little education

Yet taught the British

How to speak and write the 'English'

You

Are a mortal flesh,

But you made your brain immortal

By writing and oratory and artistry

Art of wordsmithing

You

Are the golden being,

that has gone

Into the worthless soil

But can never be

worthless.



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**His Footprint Speaks**

*By Faith Isaac*

Gone to the other side,  
But lives in our libraries,  
speaks to our hearts and rest at our bedside.

A man with the moon in his eyes,  
Giving the earth a spa ride,  
With good tidings  
Residing on our rooftop.

A literary warrior  
who fought through words,  
Sentences and proverbs  
To a victorious end.

Knowledge and ideas drenched him  
like manna from heaven  
which extends for satisfaction,  
Crossed borders, territories,  
Climbed walls and jump mountains  
To give messages of hope and peace to sons of men,

His battles knew no end  
In his quest to revamp things  
Which had fallen apart,  
Now travelled to the land of silence.

But his footmark strongly rooted to the soil,  
Not even the strongest hurricane  
can ever erase,  
A hero he is, a hero he will always be.  
His Footprint Speaks.



**Chinua Achebe**

*By Abegunde Sunday Ola-Oluwa*

Cheeringly, my pool of ink  
pens panegyric of him.  
His story in our history  
is not on mere scrolls;  
it's in our hearts  
in memorial of his praiseworthy roles.

Not for once was he at ease against elitism  
under their canopies in corruption's forest  
after he gave his best in independence's quest.

Achebe, pen god to whom literature bowed  
Chinua, an Intellectual Bruce Lee from Ogidi  
Albert had soared into fluffy cloud,  
ever shall he be remembered as legendary.  
Beware soul brother.  
Thy sun never dies  
every sunset lays egg of new sunrise.



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**Chinua Achebe: Beyond A Legend**

*By Onah Stanley Kenechi.*

From the enclave of Ogidi came an unlikely sage.  
The entirety of Africa he put on the world's stage,  
Catalysing her launching to a new civilization age,  
And telling the world we can't be seen as garbage.

A respectable Igbo progeny with eclectic brilliance;  
Very simplistic personality with sublime substance  
Blessed with style suffused in mesmerizing elegance  
Imposing profile yet bereft of any guise of arrogance.

Like a colossus, Achebe bestrode our literary space  
Upon this turf, he will remain an unmatched ace  
With flair he gripped the creative levers like a brace  
Very awesome to behold such level of cerebral grace

Novel brand of African literature Chinua pioneered  
Invaluable social reforms he very well engineered  
His pristine cultural values, he never auctioneered  
To all semblances of avarice, he repulsively sneered

Poignant were his thrusts and never would retract  
His treatise on most matters were frank and exact  
He wrote, not just to impress, but to also to impact  
His consistent compass was his passion and fact.

In a prophetic drift, he spawned  
'Things Fall Apart' Epics that followed  
Proved he was beyond smart  
They all spewed very seamlessly from the heart  
To all oddities, his works threw a reforming dart



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Unfazed by the civilization prejudice in his time  
He reflected a personality very patently sublime  
Nothing noble he spared in advancing his clime  
Icon he shall remain so long as the clocks chime

Achebe wasn't one to be swayed by banal award  
He relentlessly decried allures that were wayward  
The altruistic vision he sought was enough reward  
And quite content he was as an egalitarian steward

It is very unlikely to raise another African like him  
And that is a reality we will daily recall with grim  
His espoused ideal still overflows from the brim  
Sometimes we all feel like his death was just a sim

Everything about his life was simply beyond legendary  
His resume is a symphony of multicultural polyandry  
Relative to his values every other thing was secondary  
His prescient insight never was afflicted by quandary

Gorgeous and transcendental were all his legacies  
There's just no force that can make them fallacies  
They've so been invaluable in stirring our fantasies  
Guarding and guiding us against most profligacy

I propose he gets canonized as a global literary saint  
All his life's works have proven to be beyond daint  
His ink shall surely endure more than Picasso's paint  
Our honour it is to ensure his persona suffers no faint



**To Mourners**

*By Okeehukwu Onuegbu*

Dry your tears my people  
Beware soul Brother is no;  
He traversed beyond  
To mediate, chart and intercede  
For us amidst our asleep heroes  
Heroines and icons  
To lift our fits  
From deadly pits dug by our colonial masters  
Who stole the contents of our brains with their God?  
Pride of our lands and Water

Dry your tears my people  
Although things Fall apart  
Prof. Chinua Achebe is alive  
Voicing our mind to the Maker  
If your eyes see as my poesy eyes  
And your ears hearken to literary voice  
You will understand that he's alive  
Charting  
Educating  
And instructing  
Us in his inks to swim through Niger and Nile  
Be Africana in lips and foot  
Not Mississippi and Pacific Ocean  
Whose gods enslaved our God.

But the trouble with Nigeria  
Is that the internet has imprisoned the books  
While the Anthills of Savannah  
Have buried "the truth of fiction"



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Prompting the UNN Professor of Literature  
To remark that “imaginative literature  
Does not enslave but liberate the minds of people  
Its truth is not like the canon orthodoxy  
Or the irrationality of prejudice and superstition  
It begins as an adventure in self-discovery  
Ends in wisdom and human conscience”

Oh my God! Death why? Ah!  
Did I mention death? Sorry,  
Achebe is not dead  
The Ambassador of defunct  
Risen Sun has travelled  
To inculcate peace in the minds  
of Girls at war.. .'   
Because he's a peace envoy.

Believe me  
The Prof, of Massachusetts Amherst is not dead  
He's staring at you  
See him there liaising with the Maker  
To revive Okike  
Edit and reawaken Igbo Life and Culture  
Home and Exile  
Chair Nigerian writers to be self-reliant not copycat  
But things are No Longer at Ease  
Soccer has downthrown the pens.

We must dry our River-Niger tears  
Seed dies to sprout and bear more seeds  
The Man of the People  
Has gone to bear  
The arrow of God



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And defend us from invading foes  
In as much There Was a Country  
There is a Writer  
"In whose words  
The prison walls fell"  
As sun revolves for moon to emerge  
One day there must be a country  
Envisaged by Brown University Africans Professor

Christie, Chinelo, Nvvando, Ikechukwu, Chidi  
Africans indeed, we must dry our River-Benue tears  
The illustrious son of Light of the Nation  
Enclave of the giant of Africa  
Good People, Great Nation  
This mourning should inspire  
Us to bury our differences, blades, ammunitions  
And Egunje devastating our lands  
Sucking the sweats of our founding fathers  
Sweet night Nwa Ogidi!  
You will live to be remembered by generations  
Sweet night the son of Achebe!



**Achebe's Bone**

*By Agele Ayowole Samuel*

Come; let us go to his grave  
Where he peacefully lies  
Let us go and wake him up  
From his deep slumber

Let us tell him:  
The glorious battle he fought for  
With all his might  
Has been victoriously won by his enemies

Let us tell him:  
The people he fought for  
Have turned their back on him  
They have taken the back of his villains

Let us tell him:  
His sword has been carted away  
And his fort has been captured  
While his loyal servants lay dead in his tomb

Some said, "Achebe is long gone  
To the land of the dead  
He won't come back to us  
Even if we call his name aloud

Chinua will never hear our cries  
Not even our wails  
For he is no more one of us  
His body has decayed

But his drum can never be left unbeaten  
To the ears of the cowards  
Come; let us go to his grave  
And heave up his bones.



**God of many**

***By Bright Sado Omo***

Many you are in one, the great pen bender.  
Proverbs are positioned as slaves in your palace.  
Soothsayer, speaker of wise words.  
Son of the soil, bold and strong.  
god in man's clothing.  
No wonder you wrote the future like the past.  
Son of Ogidi, yet a god to all.  
Truth by truth,  
You dish out the truth from your pot of creation.

Things fall apart, but yours remain as a whole.  
No longer at ease am I, with your absence.  
Arrow of God now belongs to men,  
Conrad trembles at your arrow.  
Biafran-god, your influence glued aid from abroad.  
Many you are in one, the great pen bender.  
Proverbs are positioned as slaves in your palace  
Soothsayer, speaker of wise words,  
Son of the soil, bold and strong.



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**Famished Hearts**

*By John Chizoba Vincent*

Tell Chinua Achebe  
that things just fell apart.  
Not then when he saw the vision.

We have no Okonkwo in the land anymore  
and the animals are more in our communities;  
George Orwell's Pigs of our century.

They said "All animals are equal in a democratic land  
but now, we discovered that some are more  
equal than others in the same democratic country", why?

Our hearts are famished,  
wandering in the empty street in search of nothing  
and nothing is seen to eat nor drink in this  
famished,  
lost land called a home, it is not a home but forest!

Tell Chinua Achebe  
that the vision he saw years back now hurts us  
more.  
The whites are more in power than the days of  
great Okonkwo and we are left unclothed in the  
land.

All we see are famished hearts, famished souls,  
a haunting heart that seizes the call of grace.  
Ignominious!  
Ignominious!



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Shall the dry bones ever rise again here?  
Things have fallen apart in this country  
and the centre can no longer hold together.  
The shoes we wore yesterday,  
now walk on marbles of sorrow.

If wisdom will be a friend to those Pigs,  
if suffering will bear no trend against us,  
and we forget our plights with the rain,  
the mirror will be a better view to connect us  
to the world where tomorrow exists in joy.

**May God Fight On My Behalf**  
*By Agholor Henry Nduka.*

There was a Country  
Standing on its spaghetti and skeletal legs  
Her Hopes and Impediments are in kegs  
A Man of the People begs  
May God fight on my behalf.

Morning yet on Creation  
Day during Christmas in Biafra  
In a Village Church, choruses clouds the chancel  
Home and exile, we don't have another country  
May God fight on my behalf.

Beware, Soul Brother! Beware, Soul Brother!!  
The centre is cracking and it is No Longer at Ease  
The Trouble with Nigeria is self-inflicted  
May God fight on my behalf.

The Anthills of the Savannah are gone  
The Refugee Mother and Child cries are as dry as bone  
We watch as Things Fall Apart in our zone  
May God fight on my behalf

It is the birth of Another Africa  
The Flute and The Drum reverberates a new Civil Peace  
As the Arrow of God silenced the boys and Girls at War  
May God fight on my behalf.



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**Strategic Options to Maximizing The Legacies Of Achebe Literary Writing.**

***By Udosoh Anyanime***

If lives had duplicate, we wouldn't have so frowned at such a colossal loss as (he death of a literary connoisseur Late Prof. Chinua Ac he be. With a startling statistics of the huge number of people that cuts across races, tribes and classes around the world whose Achebe's literary works have moulded and modelled, urgently enumerating, indoctrinating and sustaining the benefits of Achebe's works in the literary world of our teeming youths as they contribute to the advancement of contemporary African literature couldn't have come at a better time as this.

First, to create and introduce Achebe's writing as a branch of English Literature in our school curriculum is an important strategic option that should be done. The themes in his novels, short stories, poetry', children books, essays criticism, non-fiction and political commentary are essential in our world today and most productive when applied not only for the admiration and remembrance of histories, but for excellent communal living amongst people with diverse conflicting views void of violence. Things Fall Apart, which is his most read novel has received global praises and recognition, sold million copies globally and translated into fifty languages, showcases our culture, societal gender politics, taming of undue importance and superiority of the male gender and balancing both genders as being vital to peaceful living in the society. This would help to minimize if not totally obliterate the incessant cases of violence in the society.

In addition to the above, and for things not to fall apart in our society which is gradually experiencing huge moral decadence, the importance of reading culture cannot be overemphasized.



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Achebe's stories should be compulsorily drafted into prize winning contests. Nowadays, mouth-watering prize-winning contests are patronized by teeming youths who sing and dance to win fabulous prizes. Achebe's stories which are saturated with rich moral emphasis plus cultural importance should form an integral part of any contest. It should be made mandatory to read and dramatize the masterpiece in any national prize winning contest.

By so doing, we would be accelerating the absolute restoration of core-morals in our society. Also, millions of naira that are being splashed by telecom giants and other multinationals for talent hunts in music and entertainment should be splashed in academic talent hunts especially literature. In fact, the country should be awash with fantastic cash prizes, mouth-watering gifts plus national recognition in the literary world for both young and old so that we would have our youths who form the most productive part of any population fully indoctrinated with community values. Unarguably, his fantastic style of writing being contagious has endeared many African and non-African writers to his works. Spicing his stories with instructive African proverbs and communicating his narratives with diction that could be termed 'telling African stories to Africans and non-Africans in an African panache' make his stories even more appealing.

As such, the creation of an annual writing training workshop with participants reading and discussing Achebe's works and writing accordingly not necessarily his style of writing but with contemporary fluidity is an option for maximizing Achebe's legacies. This workshop undoubtedly would produce huge writers of his ilk and even better.

Nothing equates a sumptuous literary pleasure like excellently written narrative boiled in creativity and spiced with figures and



parts of speech to set the literary taste buds salivating. With the yearly emergence of stunning stars in contemporary African writing, there is no denying the widening lacuna between the literary fluidity showcasing the importance of values with conscious emphasis on morals and culture, and this day's creativity that is void of nearly all the previously mentioned good writing ingredients that made Achebe's work dense. Though there are very few writers today who portray these abilities; feigning ignorance and/or showing indifference on such a complete disaster of this widening lacuna is pure wickedness and disservice to Africans and the rest. It's high time we stopped the 'it-doesn't-concern-me' attitude if we must attain a desirable altitude.

With the above options, Africans are bound to continually soar with her own storytelling panache.

Therefore, all hands must be on deck to ensure that the application of the mentioned options would be with the spontaneity of an alarm clock buzzer thus ensuring that the legacies of Achebe live on.



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**The literary Legend – Achebe**  
*By Benjamin C. Okoli.*

The world of literature knows your fame  
Your footprint in the sand of time  
Has stayed to immortalize your name  
It's a privilege to put together this rhyme  
In the blissful memory of a legend  
Your name will tarry till the blink of the age end  
Reflecting on your numerous feat  
Enveloped deeply on my thoughtful seat.

Subconsciously myself I looked to see  
Searching for your elation a principle key  
The souls your books touch in intensity  
Were the makings of your fulfilled live  
Not a miniature was wasted of your ability

Out of your fountain pens flow  
The wisdom of ages past  
Our hearts you have set aglow  
Our eyes you have opened to the vast  
Wisdom of the ages to come  
You've set an eternal pace  
Presently and for generations to come

In one spirit and one voice  
We say we love you  
Your legacies made you our fear choice  
Again we say we love you  
They shall persist in the hearts of men  
Adieu. I heard the audience chorus  
Hopefully as I dropped my pen.



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**Nigeria, Independence and The Aftermath: A Celebratory Reading of Chinua Achebe's *A Man of The People***

*By Usnian Nurain Muhammad*

Historically, Nigeria attained independence in the year 1960 after passing through a lot in the hands of colonial overlords. Consequent upon that, the country found itself amid political unrest and moral rot which resulted in the country's submergence in the sump of corruption, mis-governance, and self-centred rule.

"It soon became clear that the art of governing was not an easy one and that there were many problems involved" To this effect, a brief revisit of the history of Nigeria after independence would help us explore the inspiration behind the writing and setting of a man of the people, and how truthfully and artistically, Achebe represents the happenings and the institutions involved.

Chinua Achebe is a Nigerian literary figure born in November, 1930. He is the author of many novels, essay sand poems. *Things Fall Apart* (1958) is his first novel. *Arrow of God* (1964) followed *No Longer at Ease* (1960) and *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987) was preceded by *A Man of the People* (1966).

Focusing on Africa and its politics as well as the culture and civilization of Africans and the effects of colonization on the African communities, *A man of the people* is not left out in satirizing the "various political and social changes that have taken place in Nigeria since its publication in 1966."

Achebe had escaped affray with soldiers who strongly believe that he had a fore knowledge of Nigeria's first military coup. This opinion was popularized because of the facticity of the prophetic



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ending of Achebe's 'A man of the people' in which a military coup was imagined.

A man of the people (1966) is 50 years old this 2016. "Just as with Things Fall Apart and Arrow of God, the power houses-that-be are reminded to set celebrations in motion". This declaration and subsequent remembrance of the celebratory' deservedness of the novel, prompted this but brief opus.

Using the English language as a global means of communication, the role of English language in Nigerian literature as it presents the history, culture and people through various works of literature cannot be overemphasized. Chinua Achebe has through his works, proved reasonable expertise in the employment of the language of English to translate some Nigerian culture to the world at large.

Political asymmetry, incongruity, politics of demagoguery, economic imbalance, corruption and moral decrepitude are part of the ambit of cynosure of Chinua Achebe's popular novel – A Man of The People (1996).

As a realist, Achebe's satirical presentation of the truthful happenings around the politics of Nigeria's first republic is evident in the paradoxical title of the novel – A Man of The People. The title conflicts sharply with the characters of chief Nanga, the Minister and Odili Samalu who contested to be 'the man of the people' before the sudden military intervention. Similarly, patriotic politicians like Odili and Max who tried to effect a 'change' in the political troubles of the country ended up campaigning without popular support as the power pilots continue to misappropriate the wealth of the country. Here Achebe in the first paragraph of the novel



No one can deny that Chief Honourable M. A. Nanga. M .P was the most approachable politician in the country. Whether you asked in the city or in his home village, Anata. they would tell you he was a man of the people

Politicians like M. A Nanga whose lives of affluence and in-depth corruption is casted to be in opposition to that of the general members of the public, were the rulers of the then Nigeria. Due to the grave mismanagement of resources and deliberate diversion of public funds to private pockets, lead to Achebe's lamentation. The country was on the verge of chaos. Trade Unions and the Civil Service Union made loud noises and gave notice of nationwide strikes.

Achebe further investigated deeply into the immoral lives of the politicians and their illicit romance with contractors over 1 0% benefits. Equally, the various cases of connivance of thugs with the political class and the evil plots to unseal a truthful minister from the cabinet reminds the country of the silencing of truthful government functionaries and journalists within the realm of the politics of the then Nigeria. Achebe's skilful surgery of the intricacies of Nigerian politics right from its foot is surprising to many critics and writers. Take a glimpse at Nanga versus Elsie (p66) and the subsequent rape case,

Linking the past to the present; Achebe made it abundantly clear that the country that was under colonialism just recently, is no better under the leadership of its own people. This, in itself, is an attestation of the fact that power can be misused by anyone and opposing such misrule is daunting to many.

Nanga, a politician, maintains a cordial relationship with his people because he supplies to them what they (the electorate) want side by side exploiting them to an unimagined extent. This



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view by Achebe as represented through the character of Chief Nanga, characterizes the majority of the mind-set of Nigerians; to prefer to suffer at the expense of a 'token' of the so called democratic dividend but in the iron hands of almighty dictators than to sacrifice the 'token' for greater national development in the merciful hands of versioned, decent politicians.

Relating the sequence of happenings captured by the novel, one would be right to declare that Achebe's diagnoses of the events in question should not just be narrowed to the first republic Nigeria. The issues raised are still happening 50 years after the writing the book. Satirically, Nigeria has not long elected 'a man of the people' at the helm of its affairs.

Overall, as the country celebrates Achebe and his 50 year old A Man of The People, it is expected that this effort would serve as a source of inspiration to further study of the novel. Through this medium, students, critics and lovers of literature are encouraged to wield their pens in celebration of our own literary 'grandpa'. I must admit that the novel in view was written and published exactly 30 years before I was born. Yet, the artistry and mastery of the writer; Achebe gives my generation the joy and admonition it needs.

**The Birth of the New Race**  
*By Chioma Aniagolu*

Strangled in the world of mediocrity,  
till-land of literature was impregnated,  
yet it was too lonely and deserted.  
the African could not hold back  
the joy the land of Ogidi brought,

With eight million reputation all over.  
The most translated writer  
was born of Anambra  
and its tentacles spreads out  
with four children books,  
five novels, six poetry books  
eight essays and criticism,  
eight short stories  
and other unnamed tentacles.

The father of African writers  
created awareness.  
the 1990 accident could only disable  
the physical body  
not the mental state  
of the African tradition  
theme writer who toured  
the living biosphere with imparts.

Nomenclature moved the motion on  
and god did not only fight for him  
but made him the winning warrior  
in different field  
both in Nigeria, African and beyond.



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to Heinemann i am very grateful  
for the reality of the first work  
was instrumented by him.

Even the trauma  
and addiction of professionalism  
in Nigerian education system  
could not hold the crowned king  
of English, history and theology in the university.  
The degree was not a limitation,  
as second class only proved him qualified  
for the war to set a height.

Unbreakable in African literature  
humility truth, patience and sincerity  
are among the virtues the father of  
writers  
taught us as young writers of Africa  
and hence we celebrate him  
Ogidi land was the birth,  
we are the promoters,  
to explore the factor and its  
relevance  
in our field  
as unity remains constant.



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**In His Valour**

*By Samuel Nzoputachi*

For in his valour  
I, too, can reach into the  
Night-sky and pluck stars

I have got the guts to stain the moon  
With my delicious roasted yam and palm oil  
I am bold to tell the world that  
Things can also be lovely in this world.

Like my ever flowing village stream.  
So chilled that, when drunk,  
It tickles as it lizards its way down the throat.

For in his valour  
I bounce among the other children of the world  
I too, have a father drummer  
When he starts to pummel his drum  
His muscles tremble severely  
He knows to manipulate the intricate beauties of our ancient  
rhythms

I tell them  
Look, you cannot resist it  
They think I am joking  
Until they witness it themselves  
Until we are gathered on the world's stage  
Then madness becomes the rhythm that drums their awe



## **He Lives On**

*By Chisom Udeoba*

Everyday people die – the old, young, advanced all inclusive. Death is an expected stage in a human's life. A lot of people are dead, few are remembered and a lot have been forgotten. Achebe is among the few that can never be forgotten. Chinua Achebe lived a life worthy of remembrance.

Achebe did not only write wonderful works; he was among the foremost literary heroes in the country. His book "Things fall apart" was published in 1962 and even though it was the third book to be published by a Nigerian, it was the first to be received with a great euphoria not only in Nigeria but the world and it has been translated into many languages. I am sure that today almost everybody in Nigeria has read "*Things Fall Apart*".

Achebe loved Nigeria but hated corruption and all the cankerworms eating Nigeria up. He stood for justice and against moral decadence. He depicted all these through his works. He wrote plainly about the problem with Nigeria. He was ever ready to stand strong for the truth and for a better country.

He also trained children and mentored young writers knowing that they are the future of tomorrow. He was ever ready to teach and wet the appetite of literarily hungry souls. Today we have many acclaimed writers who learnt from Achebe.

Chinua Achebe lived a life that is worthy of remembrance and the world would keep remembering him for he has made his mark. He has impacted lives not only through his works but through his deeds and that is an example for even-one. Living is more important when we touch lives and leave an indelible mark for the world to remember us for. That is what Achebe has done, and he shall be celebrated continually even as he perpetually lives on in our hearts.



**The Spirit's Pen**

*By Lekan Malik*

His pen was mightier than sword.  
This we daily say  
But others know not.  
Oh, mighty pen!  
That's creatively useful  
When Things Fall Apart,  
And was used by The Man of the People,  
And of honour and nobility.  
The skilful pen  
That's sharp like the Arrow of God  
And was shot from the Anthills of The Savannah  
To a country.  
Yes! There Was a Country,  
that country  
Which is No Longer at Ease.



**Achebe: A Dead That Lives**  
***By Salami Ugwu Lawrence.***

Men live to die; that's uselessness,  
But you Chinua, live, die, only to relive.  
Elegy we will write,  
Dirge humanity will sing tirelessly,  
For to mourn you Achebe  
Oh! What sweet pleasure we gain.  
People thought you were dead,  
Not knowing that it was your body,  
Our gratitude will till tomorrow flows,  
Thanking you for having paved the way,  
Though our naked eyes cannot see you.  
But our sincere heart does;  
For it's unwise for Christianity to forget Peter,  
For those South Negros to forget Nelson,  
And if history tries such with you.  
We will remind her.  
That when things fall apart.  
We should try not to be at ease,  
To avoid the nubs of life.  
And if it is this life,  
You came, saw, and conquered literally.  
My regards to Pep. Okeke and Odum,  
Whose vibrant bones sleep noisily.  
In the catacombs of hopeful hope.  
Tell them that we are yet to have a Joshua.  
Tell them that we still on our way home  
That their desire is still ours,  
That when time ripens.  
That we longed hope for.  
We will achieve impeccably.



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**QUOTES BY CHINUA ACHEBE**

1. "Among the Igbo the art of conversation is regarded very highly, and proverbs are the palm-oil with which words are eaten."
2. "When something stands, something else will stand beside it"
3. "The sun will shine on those who stand before ii shines on those who kneel under them."
4. "When the moon is shining, the cripple becomes hungry for a walk."
5. "A proud heart can survive general failure because such a failure does not prick its pride. It is more difficult and more bitter when a man fails alone."
6. "When a man says yes, his chi says yes also."
- 7 "No matter how prosperous a man was, if he was unable to rule his women and his children (and especially his women) he was not really a man."
8. "A boy sent by his father to steal does not go stealthily but breaks the door with his feet."
9. "When an old woman hears the dance she Knot's, her old age deserts her."
10. "An old woman is always uneasy when dry hones are mentioned in a proverb."
11. *It* is only when you are close to a man that you can begin to smell his breath."
12. "If a blind man does not know his own stick, tell me what else would he know?"
13. "If you fail to take away a strong man's sword when he is on the ground, will you do it when he gets up?"
14. "A man who avoids danger for years and then gets killed in the end has wasted his care."
15. "When a mad man walks naked, it is his kinsmen who feel shame, not himself."



16. "A madman may sometimes speak a true word, but you watch him, he will soon add something to it that will tell you his mind is spoilt."
17. "A goat does not eat into a hen's stomach no matter how friendly the two may be."
18. "A man of worth never gels up to unsay what he said yesterday."
19. "The inquisitive eye will only blind its own .sight."
20. "A man who does not lick his lips, can he blame the harmattan for drying them?"
21. "Eneke the bird was asked why he was always on the wing and he replied: "Men have learned to shoot without missing their mark and I have learned lo fly without perching on twig,"
22. "Whenever you see a toad jumping in broad daylight, then know that something is after its life."
23. "A man who lived on the banks of the Niger should not wash his hands with spittle."
24. "You cannot plant greatness as you plant yams or maize. Whoever planted an Iroko tree — the greatest tree in the forest? You may collect all the Iroko Seeds in the world, open the soil and put them there. It will be in vain. The great tree chooses where to grow and we find it there, so it is with the greatness in men."
25. "If one ringer brings oil. it soils the others."
26. "A man to whom you do a favour will not understand if you say nothing, make no noise, and just walk away. You may cause more trouble by refusing a bribe than by accepting it."
27. "When there is a big tree, small ones climb on its back to reach the sun."
28. "An angry man is always a stupid man,"



29. "The emperor would prefer the poet to keep away from politics, the emperor's domain, so that he can manage things the way he likes."
30. "You must develop the habit under scepticism, no! swallow every piece of superstition you are told by witchdoctors and professors."
31. "A man's life from birth to death was a series of transition rites which brought him nearer and nearer to his ancestors,"
32. "Would a sensible man spit out the juicy morsel that good fortune put in his mouth?"
33. To answer oppression with appropriate resistance requires knowledge of two kinds: in the first place, self-knowledge by the victim, which means awareness that oppression exists, an awareness that the victim has fallen from a great height of glory or promise into the present depths; secondly, the victim must know- who the enemy is. He must know his oppressor's real name, not an alias, a pseudonym, or a nom de plume!"
34. "Art is man's constant effort to create for himself a different order of reality from that which is given to him."
35. "What kind of power was it if it would never be used?"
36. The most awful thing about power is not that it corrupts absolutely but that it makes people so utterly boring, so predictable."
37. "Once you allow yourself to identify with the people in a story, then you might begin to see yourself in that story even if on the surface it's far removed from your situation. This is what I try to tell my students: this is one great thing that literature can do — it can make us identify with situations and people faraway. If it does that, it's a miracle." 38. A debt may get mouldy, but it never decays."



39. "As a rule I don't like suffering to no purpose. Suffering should be creative, should give birth to something good and lovely."
40. "The while man is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart."
41. "Charity is the opium of the privileged,"
42. "What a man does not know is greater than he."
43. "Only a foolish man can go after a leopard with his bare hands."
44. "An artist in my view is always afraid of extremists; he is always afraid of those who claim to have found the ultimate solution to any question."
45. "Do you blame a vulture for perching over a carcass?"
46. "If you only hear one side of the story, you have no **understanding** atoll."
47. "When suffering knocks at your door and you say there is no seat for him,- he tells you not to worry because he has brought his own stool."
48. "In dealing with a man who thinks you are a fool, it is good sometimes to remind him **that** you know what he knows but have chosen to appear foolish for the sake of peace."
49. "The price a world language must be prepared to pay is submission to many different kinds of use."
50. "People say that if you find water rising up to your ankle, that is me time to do something about it, not when it is around your neck."
51. "Americans, it seems to me, tend to protect their children from the harshness of life, in their interest. That's not the



- way my people rear their children. They let them experience the world as it is."
52. "Contradictions, if well understood and managed can spark off the fires of invention. Orthodoxy whether of the right or of the left is the- graveyard of creativity."
53. "What is modesty but inverted pride?"
54. "While we do our good works let us not forget that the real solution lies in a world in which charity will have become unnecessary."
55. "If you don't like someone's story, write your own."
56. "To me, being an intellectual doesn't mean knowing about intellectual issues; it means taking pleasure in them."
57. "An only palm fruit does not get lost in the fire."
58. "Nobody can teach me who I am. You can describe parts of me, but who I am - and what I need - is something I have to find out myself."
59. "One of the truest tests of integrity is its blunt refusal to be compromised."
60. "We cannot trample upon the humanity of others without devaluing our own. He who will hold another down in the mud must stay in the mud to keep him down."
61. "A man may refuse to do what is asked of him but he may not refuse to be asked."
62. There is no story that is not true. The world has no end, and what is good among one people is an abomination with others."
63. "When we hear a house has fallen, do we ask if the ceiling fell with it?"
64. "Those whose palm kernels were cracked for them by a benevolent spirit should not forget to be humble."
65. "We do not want to be like the unfortunate child who grows his first tooth and grows a damaged one."



66. "When an adult is in the house, the she-goat is not left to suffer the pains of parturition on its tether."
67. "Storytellers are a threat. They threaten all champions of control; they frighten usurpers of the right-to-freedom of the human spirit - in state, in church or mosque, in party congress, in the university or wherever."
68. "It is praiseworthy to be brave and fearless, but sometimes it is better to be a coward. We often stand in the compound of a coward to point at the ruins where a brave man used to live."
69. "Wisdom is like a goatskin bag; every man carries his own,"
70. "Oh, the most important thing about myself is that my life has been full of changes. Therefore, when I observe the world, I don't expect to see it just like I was seeing the fellow who lives in the next room.
71. There is this complexity which seems to me to-be part of the,—meaning of existence and everything we value."
73. "A boy who Tries to wrestle with his father gets""/ ^blinded by the old man's loincloth."
74. "A woman who began cooking before another must have more broken utensils,"
75. "It was, deeper and more intimate that the (ear of evil and capricious gods and of magic, the fear of the forest, and of the forces of nature, malevolent, red in tooth and claw."
76. "When a handshake goes below the elbow, then know that it has turned into something else."
77. "Privilege, you see is one of the great adversaries ' of the imagination; it spreads a thick layer of adipose tissue over our sensitivity."

*Compiled by Sam C. Okudah 2013©*

