1961/62 REGULAR PROGRAMME

Creative Artists

NIGERIA

Albert ACHIEBE - Writer
7 October, 1963.

Subject: Mr. Achebe - Writer's fellowship allocated to Nigeria under the Organisation's Regular Programme for 1961/1962.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that Mr. Albert Chimua Achebe, holder of the above mentioned fellowship, left the United Kingdom (London) where he was carrying on from 1 September a training according to the study programme drawn up on his behalf, curtailng thus his fellowship on 24 September.

Mr. Achebe explained to the British Council (Unesco's administering agency in the U.K.) that he was called back in Nigeria for professional reasons and that he would not be able to return to London.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

I. Dandolo
Chief,
Division of Fellowship Administration
International Exchange Service.

The Permanent Secretary,
Federal Ministry of Education
LAGOS
Nigeria
Nationality of candidate: NIGERIAN

Field of study: LITERATURE

Proposed date of commencement of fellowship and duration: APRIL 1963, SIX MONTHS

Date of application: 27.2.62

PERSONAL DATA

Full name and address. Please record address for mailing purposes. Underline surname.

ALBERT CHINUA ACHEBE
BROADCASTING HOUSE, LAGOS, NIGERIA

Emergency address. Give name of relative or other emergency address.

Name: CHRISTIE ACHEBE
Address: 8 MILVERTON ROAD, IKOYI, LAGOS

Place of birth: OGIDI, NIGERIA
Date of birth: 16 Nov 1930

Single, married, widowed or divorced: MARRIED
Date of marriage: 10 Sept 1961
Number of children: 1

Wife's/Husband's Name: CHRISTIE ACHEBE
Age and sex of children: 1

Present position: DIRECTOR OF EXTERNAL BROADCASTING

Annual salary: £2530
What part of this salary will be continued if fellowship is granted?: NIL

What income do you have in addition to above salary which will not continue during your absence?: NIL
## EDUCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>NAME AND PLACE OF INSTITUTION</th>
<th>Duration of Studies</th>
<th>DIPLOMA OR DEGREE</th>
<th>Year of Graduation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Government College, Umahia</td>
<td>1944-1948</td>
<td>E.A.M.B.</td>
<td>1948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>University College Ibadan</td>
<td>1944-1953</td>
<td>B.A.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### KNOWLEDGE OF LANGUAGES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LANGUAGE</th>
<th>READ</th>
<th>UNDERSTAND</th>
<th>SPEAK</th>
<th>WRITE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibo</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Important: Attach language certificate duly filled out and signed.

### FELLOWSHIPS OR SCHOLARSHIPS HELD FOR STUDIES ABROAD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sponsor</th>
<th>Institution and country of study</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rockefeller (Travel)</td>
<td>East &amp; Central Africa (Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika, Ethiopia, Rhodesia)</td>
<td>Nov 1960 to Apr 1961</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TRAVEL ABROAD (Not listed above)

- Britain - To observe BBC

### PUBLICATIONS

- Things Fall Apart - Heinemann 1958 185 pp
- No Longer at Ease - " 1960 170"
- Sacrificial Egg - Atlantic Monthly (short story) 1959
- Chike's School Days - Rotarian (short story) 1960

### REFERENCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>POSITION</th>
<th>ADDRESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K.O. Dike</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Univ. College, Ibadan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.C. Ike</td>
<td>Dep. Registrar</td>
<td>University of Nigeria, Nsukka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Idowu</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>Univ. Coll. Ibadan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Certificate of Language Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of candidate</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albert Chinua Achebe</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Address of candidate**: Broadcasting House, Lagos, Nigeria

**1. Ability to Understand**
- (a) Understands without difficulty when addressed at normal rate
- (b) Understands almost everything, if addressed slowly and carefully
- (c) Requires frequent repetition and/or translation of words and phrases
- (d) Does not understand spoken language

**2. Ability to Speak**
- (a) Speaks fluently and accurately and is easily intelligible
- (b) Speaks intelligibly, but is not fluent or altogether accurate
- (c) Speaks haltingly, and is often at a loss for words and phrases

**3. Ability to Write**
- (a) Writes with ease and accuracy
- (b) Writes slowly and/or with only a moderate degree of accuracy
- (c) Writes with difficulty and makes frequent mistakes

**4. Reading Ability and Comprehension**
- (a) Reads fluently, with full comprehension
- (b) Reads slowly, but understands almost everything he reads
- (c) Reads with difficulty, and only with frequent recourse to the dictionary
- (d) Cannot read

**5. Technical Language**

Certain fellowships require a particular knowledge of specialized or technical language. In such cases, please evaluate candidate's ability with reference to paras. 1, 2, and 4 above.

**6. Please indicate any further facts about candidate's language knowledge which may be of value in the development of his programme:**

Language test has been made by: [Sign]

Title: [Sign]

Address: EK 2823 Lagos

Date: 7/5/62

**Comments:**

IMP/339 Rev.
The most fundamental problem of Nigerian education is that it is not sufficiently related to its environment. In fact it is often positively at variance with it. This fact has a historical explanation. In the beginning education was linked with evangelization, and the aim of the first missionary teachers was to produce people literate enough to read the Bible and thus help to spread the gospel. When government came into the field of education it aimed at producing clerks, interpreters, policemen, soldiers, etc. Today our educational system still suffers from these early limitations.

The problem can be stated in popular jargon thus: 
Our educational system still has to be Nigerianised. In whatever direction one looks this fact stares one in the face. Thus there is nothing in the content of our education to give the slightest indication that Nigeria is 90% an agricultural country.

But the aspect of the problem which interests me most is culture. Until quite recently very few people would suggest that there was such a thing as culture in our society. Our sculpture, singing and dancing were lumped together with paganism from which the "educated" wished to escape. During school festivals boys "drilled" and girls demonstrated may-pole dances. The cultured man was a person who knew European literature and appreciated European music and art.

Things are changing today, but not changing fast enough.
I am sure that one can find in our universities students who have never heard of the Nok Culture. It is possible for a student to take an arts degree without having read a single Nigerian author.

There is no easy way of changing this situation. It is part of our colonial heritage. A change will only come as we get more confident in ourselves, and especially in our past. The job before our historians is immense. They must show that a former governor of Nigeria was wrong when he said that all the pageant of history passed us by. The job before the Nigerian novelist is equally important. He can recreate the past much more effectively than a historian, provided he has integrity and skill. My ambition is to recreate the past of the Ibos and to show that like other pasts it had its good as well as its bad sides. There is a danger to romanticise, as Camara Laye does in *The Dark Child*. I think it is wrong to pretend that our past was one long technicolour idyll. Apart from the violence such an exercise must do to an author's integrity, it is useless as a means of creating confidence in our past because it could be easily discredited.

What I require from the fellowship is the opportunity of widening my scale of reference and acquiring more skill so that I can make my contribution to Nigerian literature.
I should like to observe the work of some American writers at close quarters. In particular, I should like to study the contemporary negro novel in America. One of the problems of the Nigerian writer today is that he operates in solitary confinement. The fellowship would enable me to widen my outlook and learn something from a country in which the literary pulse is beating much more strongly. I have chosen America because it is comparatively a young country and is likely to possess the kind of experience which may be relevant to new nations.

I should also like to see the working of the American system of the "novelist in residence" in one or two universities, and to see whether a similar system would not produce in Nigerian literature the desired "shot in the arm." Today in Nigeria it is possible for a student to go through a university course without reading a single novel or poem by his country's writers or even being aware of them. The system of having a writer or an artist in residence may go some way to correct this situation.
PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

PREVIOUS POSITIONS. Describe your professional career indicating names of employers, years of service in each post; the nature of your functions and responsibilities. Use separate sheet if necessary

HEAD OF TALKS - NIGERIAN BROADCASTING CORP 1957-58
Responsible for talks programmes in English

CONTROLLER - NBC 1958-61
Responsible for the East Region network of NBC

PRESENT POSITION
Title of post
Description of your functions including personal responsibilities
DIRECTOR, EXTERNAL BROADCASTING
Responsible for establishing and expanding the new service - V.OICE OF NIGERIA

Years of service
From: NOV 1961 To: PRESENT DAY

Name and address of employer
DIRECTOR-GENERAL
NIGERIAN BROADCASTING CORP
BROADCASTING HOUSE, IKOYI, LAGOS

Type of organization
RADIO

Name of supervisor
IAN MACKAY

FUTURE POSITION
If the fellowship is requested to prepare you for a specific post to be assigned to you on your return home please give full description of post

OFFICIAL STATEMENT
The following statement is required from the official authority sponsoring the candidate.

This is to certify that should a fellowship be granted to .......................................................... whose application is presented herewith, he will either be maintained in his present position or will be given a new position as described immediately above

Place .................................................. Date ..................................................

Signature of sponsoring authority

Name and title of sponsoring authority

CANDIDATE'S STATEMENT
If Unesco grants me a fellowship I agree to return after my period of study to the position to be assigned to me as described above

Candidate's signature