

1961/62 REGULAR PROGRAMME

Creative Artists

NIGERIA

Albert ACHEBE - Writer

2003.11 - 4/4  
EDV/TE/26

place de Fontenoy  
Paris-7<sup>e</sup>



united nations educational, scientific and cultural organization  
organisation des nations unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture

téléphone : SUffren 98-70.  
SUffren 86-00, SOLlerino 99-48  
télégraphe : UnescoParis  
telex : 27602 Paris

in your reply, please refer to :  
en répondant, veuillez rappeler :

" IES 4511/93 SM:tp

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 Chinua 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, curtailing 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



IES

EXCHANGE OF PERSONS SERVICE

APPLICATION FOR FELLOWSHIP

Date 5329

N° 29 MAY 1962

	Nationality of candidate <b>NIGERIAN</b>	For <u>fel</u>
	Field of study <b>LITERATURE</b>	Please type or print all entries
	Proposed date of commencement of fellowship and duration <b>APRIL 1963 . SIX MONTHS</b>	Use additional sheets if necessary
	Date of application <b>27.2.62</b>	Attach: 1. Language certificate 2. Medical certificate including thorax X-Ray

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** Relationship: **WIFE**  
 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: **-**

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

Present position: **DIRECTOR OF EXTERNAL BROADCASTING**

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

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

## EDUCATION

TYPE	NAME AND PLACE OF INSTITUTION	Duration of Studies		DIPLOMA OR DEGREE	Year of Graduation
		From	To		
Secondary School	GOVERNMENT COLLEGE, UMUAHIA	1944	1948	CAMB. SCHOOL CERT	1948
University and Faculty	UNIVERSITY COLLEGE IBADAN ARTS	1948	1953	B.A.	
Post-University	—				
Other Studies	—				

## KNOWLEDGE OF LANGUAGES

LANGUAGES	READ			UNDERSTAND			SPEAK			WRITE		
	Exc.	Good	Fair	Exc.	Good	Fair	Exc.	Good	Fair	Exc.	Good	Fair
ENGLISH	✓			✓			✓			✓		
IBO	✓			✓			✓			✓		

Important: attach language certificate duly filled out and signed

## FELLOWSHIPS OR SCHOLARSHIPS HELD FOR STUDIES ABROAD

Sponsor	Institution and country of study	Duration	
		From	To
ROCKEFELLER (TRAVEL)	EAST & CENTRAL AFRICA (KENYA, UGANDA, TANGANYIKA ETHIOPIA, RHODESIA)	NOV 1960	APR 1961

## TRAVEL ABROAD (Not listed above)

What countries have you already visited and for what purposes

BRITAIN - to observe BBC

## PUBLICATIONS

Give title, name of publisher or journal, date of publication, number of pages. Use separate sheet if necessary.

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

Indicate persons acquainted with your professional qualifications. Recommendations are not required with this application but may later be requested by Unesco

NAME	POSITION	ADDRESS
K. O. DIKE	PRINCIPAL	UNIV. COLLEGE, IBADAN
V. C. IKE	DEP. REGISTRAR	UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA
B. IDOWU	LECTURER	UNIV. COLL. IBADAN

Training of African University Staff

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE SERVICE

APPLICATION FOR FELLOWSHIP

CERTIFICATE OF LANGUAGE KNOWLEDGE

Name of candidate	ALBERT CHINUA ACHEBE	Language	ENGLISH
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Address of candidate	BROADCASTING HOUSE, LAGOS, NIGERIA
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(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 accurately .....
- (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: *W. Nelson* .....

Title: *Chief of Mission* .....

Address: *Box 2823, Lagos* .....

Date: *7/5/62* .....

COMMENTS:

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.

Proposed country (ies) of study in order of preference

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BRITAIN

Professors or experts with whom you propose to work and institution(s) in which you propose to study

Describe in detail the studies you propose to carry out if a fellowship is granted to you. Describe also the practical use you intend to make of these studies on your return home either in your present position or in the future post that may be assigned to you. A clear and precise plan of studies and outline of your future work will facilitate successful arrangements for reception in the country (ies) of study. Note that Unesco fellowships cover a period of six months unless otherwise indicated.

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.

Continue on separate sheet if necessary



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 DIRECTOR EXTERNAL BROADCASTING

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

Description of your functions including personal responsibilities

Responsible for establishing and expanding the new service - VOICE OF NIGERIA

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