
BOOK REVIEW

BESSIE HEAD AND THE TRAUMA OF EXILE

Identity And Alienation In South Africa Fiction

Book Description

This book investigates themes of exile and oppression in Southern Africa across Bessie Head's novels and short fiction.

An exile herself, arriving in Botswana as a South African refugee, Bessie Head's fiction serves as an important example of African exile literature. This book argues that Head's characters are driven to exile as a result of their socio-political ambivalence while still in South Africa, and that this sense of discomfort follows them to their new lives. Investigating themes of trauma and identity politics across colonial and post-colonial contexts, this book also addresses the important theme of black-on-black prejudice and hostility which is often overlooked in studies of Head's work.

Covering Head's shorter fiction as well as her major novels *When Rain Clouds Gather*, (1969) *Maru*, (1971) and *A Question of Power*, (1973), *Serowe: Village of the Rain Wind* (1981), and *A Bewitched Crossroads: An African Saga* (1984), this book will be of interest to researchers of African literature and post-colonial history.

Its ultimate message rests on Bessie Head's last novel entitled as, "...Crossroads..." which becomes eminently important to her vision of pan-humanity. It emphasises/strengthens the relationship between people and how important it is to break prejudices, hence the crossroads between people, the crossroads between nations, the crossroads between races, the crossroads between classes, the crossroads between genders, and the crossroads between tribes.

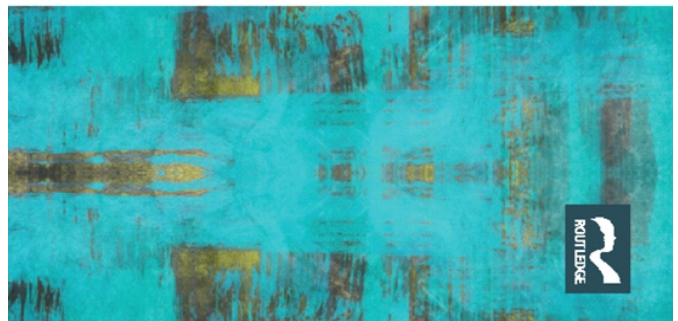
It urges us to see the world beyond the shade or the somatic marker of human prejudice and to desist from maintaining the boundaries of racial/tribal difference—so as to embrace the precious form of solidarity and community of one people—a community which consists of a two-pronged paradox: that of transforming the basic elements of the African society from the defining trauma of prejudice and, then, into a community of one national identity—the non-racial/tribal community that signifies the imagined "Rainbow people" of one nation.



BESSIE HEAD AND THE TRAUMA OF EXILE

IDENTITY AND ALIENATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICAN
FICTION

Joshua Agbo



"It urges us to see the world beyond the shade or the somatic marker of human prejudice and to desist from maintaining the boundaries of racial/tribal difference—so as to embrace the precious form of solidarity and community of one people"

Reason and Imagination: A Review of Regina Achie Nege's *Let Me Die Another Day*

Joshua Agbo (Ph.D.)

Department of Languages and Linguistics
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Introduction

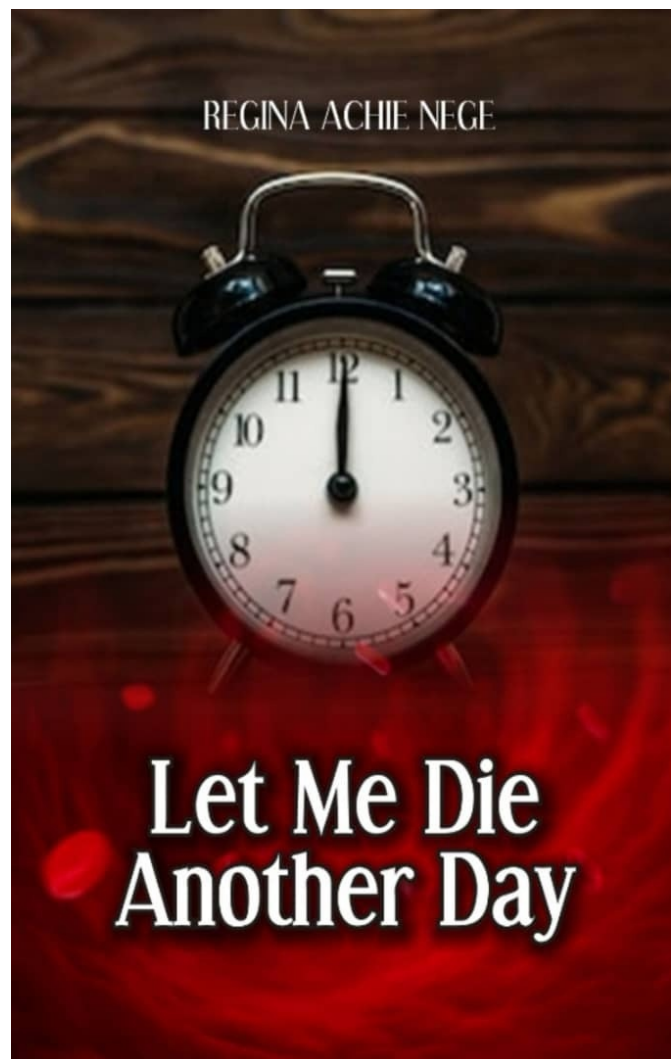
It is much of humbling, and a double joy for me to have been invited to review this new collection of poems, written by one of the guerrillas of imagination—Regina Achie Nege. To qualify as a guerrilla of imagination, you to write as well as you can. And Regina has been writing as well as she can.

To be clear, no matter to what ends we put our reading of poetry—for example, we can never lose sight of the fact that the reading of poetry is not a fixed “thing”—but an art of fiction which functions in response to a complex set of rules, readings, meanings and interpretations. And these may never be related satisfactorily to a reality outside itself; merely in a one-to-one relation.

So, if the limits of this review allow citations—then—I would like to begin with a joke made by the English novelist, Samuel Butler, who says: “God cannot alter the past, but historians can; it is perhaps because they can be useful to Him in this respect that He tolerates their existence.” If we were to take this joke to be serious, then, allowing Regina Achie Nege to die another day will result in what the 19th-Century Danish philosopher, Søren Kierkegaard calls “existential compromise” on the part of God, as He does not alter His own time. God is the time-keeper of mortality; the Lord of all creations. But, then, again, because both the historians and poets are useful to God, “He tolerates their existence”, so Regina maybe permitted to die another day—as the eponymous poem pleads for an extension of time.

But how does our understanding of life come about—or, even shift when we begin from the perspective of death? And what can this perspective offer our existence? Any serious engagement with these interrogations deepens our understanding of the “*unresting death*”, as Philip Larkin puts it. Death is the only harvest of God. It is inescapable and irreversible, too—and we are suspended between the varnished normal and the journey into the unknown.

Nevertheless, the logic of time in Regina's poetry invites us to connect with the interplay between reason and imagination—that is, reason, on the one hand, is taken as the mind contemplating the relations born by one's thoughts to another; while, imagination, on the other hand, is the mind acting upon one's thoughts to colour with its own light, and each containing within itself the principles of its integrity. Taking reason and



imagination together, both have their integrity within the realm of creativity and in the concrete world of reality. Regina dialectically puts reason and imagination together to fashion a hard-won vision of a new poetic conversation—a document hopeful of humanity—a poetry of essence.

More, on Butler's joke in connection with the poet's plea for extension of time, I would like to ask tentatively that what if I were to postpone the review of this book to another day? What if we were to shift the entire programme to another day? For proper answers, ask Regina Achie Nege. Pressingly, therefore, who is Regina Achie Nege?

A Short Biography of the Poet

Regina Achie Nege is a Benue-born poet, a graduate of English, as well as an M.A. holder from the Benue State University, Makurdi. She is a poet, mother, teacher and

editor with an incredible knowledge and experience. She is also the current Vice Chairman of the Association of Nigerian Authors, Benue State Chapter. She is hard-working, amiable and easy-going—but no matter how easy-going she is, she is hard-headed about feminist issues—and even as her writing espouses feminist aspirations, she is not a feminist—I suppose. No doubt, Regina is on the verge of emergence into the writing tradition of Audrey Lorde and bell hooks—both of whom are of the African-American background—audacious for their critical-utopian potentials to invent new and unprecedented forms of solidarity across dominance and hegemony. They are a moving force in the revolution of the human spirit. They write on behalf of us.

A See-look at the Book Itself

Let Me Die Another Day (2021), by Regina Achie Nege, published by Chapuga Publishers, Makurdi, Benue State, is a slender book of poetry of 66 pages in size, with 50 poems, bundled into themed baskets of wide-ranging topics such as, death, honour, menopause, falsehood, corruption, leadership, wound, and etc. This book whose title is magically beautiful is an enlivening exploration of

the links between man, poetry and society.

The poet, through her book, is confronted with the reality of the gendered masked power dynamics and the mutability of gender relations which reflect the patriarchy in African society. The poet rejects the premise of male supremacist ideology that places limitations on women's independence. The poet has a progressive view on gender relations and also the vocal power to critique the traumatization of women and the desire to release a living spring on their desiccated humanity to flourish. The poet is a product of her time, who allows the social and political contexts in which she either abides or challenges to guide her writing.

In this collection, the reader is entertained with the thrills, throws and laughters that a good poetry should possess. It is a comic send-up of a humour for me in particular to learn through this poetry that women also fart and that their fart is 'beans-induced'. It is a profound relief and pleasure to bring not only humanity, but humour to poetry. Regina shares with us the wonders of poetry, and the life of the mind through laughter. She uses language in a manner which takes our breath away. It is a poetry that cures with the power of humour.

BLUESLAND JOURNAL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (BJASS)

Call For Papers

Bluesland Journal of Arts and Social Sciences

(BJASS), a quarterly publication and an interdisciplinary journal, is calling for original research papers, review and trending issues in the field of Arts and Social Sciences for its maiden edition.

Interested researchers should note the following:

All papers are to undergo blind peer review, hence, Researchers should include the following information in a separate page different from the Abstract page

- Full name of Author(s)
- Institutional affiliation(s)
- E-mail address(es)
- Phone number(s)

Submission

Papers are to be submitted (in MS Word format) to admin@tittobooks.com. Also, authors are to pay a non-refundable sum of five thousand naira (₦5,000) for peer review. If the paper is accepted, Authors are to pay a publication fee of twenty thousand naira (N20,000:00) only.

Other important information include the following:

- Title of the article should not exceed 25 words

- Authors should provide 5 keywords below the abstract
- Body text should be set on Times New Roman, 12 point font size, 1.5 line spacing and must be justified
- The full article must not exceed 15 pages, including the Abstract, Text, Tables and References
- Referencing should be in line with APA Style (7th Edition)
- Papers must be rich in references and literature/empirical citations
- Authors must be consistent with spellings, preferably British spellings.

Dr. Joseph N. Chukwu 08035411077

DEPT OF MASS COMMUNICATIONS

ALEX EKWUEME FEDERAL UNIVERSITY NDUFU

ALIKE

EBONYI STATE NIGERIA.

(Editor in Chief)

A Hand Book to Critical Theory/Practical Criticism: With a Glossary of Literary Terms

1st Published by Cel-Bez Publishing Co. Ltd, Owerri
Pagination: 111 Page.
Reviewer: Elizabeth Odachi Onogwu

Critical Theory is becoming more relevant than ever in this fast changing world. As the times change, the need for newer theories that grapple with, and comprehend new advancements become indispensable. So also, is the need for these theories, old and new to be taught in schools and written about.

Kenneth Kanu's A Hand Book to Critical Theory/Practical Criticism gives a breakdown of the major critical tools in critical theory in 7 succinct chapters. Kanu begins by giving the concept of literature the age-long clarity that the definition needs. First with a general definition, "Anything written down is "literature" of sorts. One could go into a pharmacy and demand some "literature" on migraine headache, or go to an auto dealer and ask for some "literature" on a particular brand of cars." As he progresses, he succinctly clarifies that, although he refers to such written words as literature, they are "literature of sorts" but, not literature in the main definition or meaning of what literature is. He distinguishes literature into two kinds: literature of power, and literature of knowledge. He refers to literature of knowledge as dealing "with facts put together in unembellished language. All writings on mathematics, geography, the sciences or directions on how to read a map, repair gadgets." He however refers to imaginative literature as the real literature and is "more emotionally moving than intellectually instructive."

Chapter Two gives a "Theoretical Background to Literature" which begins from the explication of the three genres of literature namely prose, poetry, and drama. From Chapter Three, he traces the start-off point of critical theory which he says began with Aristotle. In this chapter, he goes on to state the role that the theorists play which is to "re-evaluates the assumptions behind the critical evaluation of any tradition of literature with the goal of putting them right." Crucial in Kanu's position in the function of theories is that "a better understanding is derived regarding the universal and local criteria for

the interpretation and evaluation of literature."

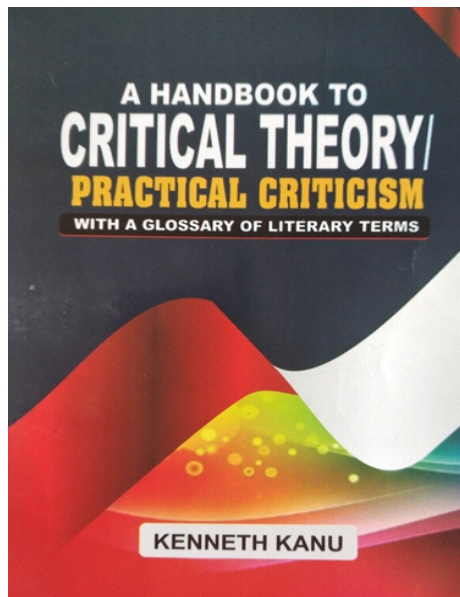
The fondness that readers cannot miss is how Kanu takes his time to explain explicitly the definition of criticism and who a critic is. Although one might not agree with him on whom he deemed a "true critic" but the accessibility that he provides for the understanding of these terms are rather amazing. He then proceeds into the "Approaches to Literary Criticism." He mentions the approaches which are "Archetypal Approach" "Moral Approach" "Formal Approach" and many other detailed explained approaches.

Helping his readers to stay abreast with current developments in literary criticism, Kanu included newer approaches to the study of criticism by first introducing New Historicism New Historicism is a literary theory related to history. Then he proceeds to Eco-Criticism which is "the study of literature and the environment from an interdisciplinary point of view, where texts are analysed, evaluated,

examined to show or illustrate environmental concerns". Here he explained the concept in details and gave copious examples of texts that can be interpreted from an eco-critical point of view while emphasising its interdisciplinarity.

In chapter 6 of the Handbook, Kanu proceeds with teaching his readers all the basic **steps to literary criticism. These steps will not be useful to literary novices but also scholars in need of a different approach than what they are already used to.**

What makes Kanu's A Hand Book to Critical Theory/Practical Criticism a worthy material on literary criticism to read is how he separates and breaks details in simple words that can be easily comprehended. After mentioning the different approaches, he proceeds to explain the new approaches to literary theory: the different newfound theories that cover specific ideas. Kanu's book shows that it has been written not just by a researcher but also by a teacher. He demystified the concept of critical theory which has seemingly been defined as an unappealing field of study because of its complexity by simplifying it so much such that any reader might think he/she is in a classroom by simply reading the book.



Congratulatory Letters To The Editor-in-Chief

Professor Nkechinyere Nwokoye, your achievements never cease to amaze us. Your new appointment as the Editor in Chief of the African Journal of Language Research (AJLR) and your victory as the newly elected member of the Governing Council of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka are all remarkable; an honor and a testament to your worth.

Congratulations once again Prof. They suit you perfectly.

Signed: *Barr. Charles & Juliet Okeyika.*

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE.

I have received with ecstasy the news of your appointment as the Editor-in-Chief of the African Journal of Language Research (AJLR), and also your election into the Governing Council of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. I am, however, not surprised at these as they are rewards for your well-known superb academic cum administrative prowess coupled with your being naturally intellectually talented. On behalf of my family, I CONGRATULATE you. It is my consumed belief that you will use these positions for the benefit of yourself and humanity in general. I wish you m^ore elevations in the days ahead.

M. Chibu. Onukawa Ph.D.

Professor of Linguistics, Abia State University Uturu, Nigeria

It is with a heart so blissful, that I write to express my profound excitement on your ability and intellectual sagacity to find yourself in the red Chambers of our most envied citadel of learning as the most distinguished Senator. I pray that the great God who has called you for this onerous assignment shall equip you to perform. Congratulations, Our most distinguished Senator of the century.

Anagor Chioma C.

HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS

Prof, I wish to congratulate you on behalf of myself and my family on your meritorious appointment as the Editor in Chief of African Journal of Language Research (AJLR) as well as your successful election into the Governing Council of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The two achievements that came at this auspicious time attest to the stuff you are made of. I pray to God Almighty to give you the wisdom and courage to enable you serve God and humanity in your new

dispensation.

Bravo Prof and God bless.

Dr D. N. Epuchie

Special Goodwill Message to Prof. Nkechinyere Anthonia Nwokoye

I heartily felicitate with Prof. Nkechinyere Anthonia Nwokoye on this epoch event on your appointment as the Editor-in-Chief of African Journal of Language Research (AJLR) as well as your election as a member of the governing council of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

As you have been elevated to this positions, may the Lord Almighty strengthen and give you more wisdom and knowledge to carry on with these tasks, for these lofty heights were attained by His grace. May His unalloyed grace be sufficient for you.

Moreso, may His unending love, mercy and protection not be far from you. Bravo! Bravo!! Bravo!!!

Miss Chidimma Anthonia Ejioforbiri,

Graduate Assistant,

Department of Igbo, African and Asian, NAU, Awka.

Heartfelt Congratulatory Message

It gives me the honour and pleasure to extend to you PROF my sincere congratulations on your appointment as a COUNCIL MEMBER.

I knew the appointment was meant for none other than you. I'm so glad it finally came your way. This is an opportunity to use the rare talent that nature has given you.

I beseech the Lord to continue to uplift you beyond expectation.

Ogoo Okpokwasili

Lecturer Philosophy Dept NAU

Congratulatory Message!!!

I, on behalf of my family congratulate you on your well deserved appointment as the Editor in Chief of African Journal of Language Research (AJLR) and as Member, Governing Council of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. We pray God to sustain you in these positions as you relentlessly discharge your duties to the Glory of His name, Amen.

Bravo! More grease to your elbow.

God bless you abundantly.

From, Dr. Peace-Val Chinomnso Eze.

Goodwill Message.

I Dr Lucy Apakama, rejoice with Prof Nkechinyere Nwokoye on her multiple elevations. For your appointment as The Chief Editor of Titto Books, African Journal of Language and Research (AJLR) , I say congratulations. For your election into the Governing Council of a Prestigious University the Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. I salute you. Prof Nkechinyere Nwokoye is an unforgettable God sent benefactor of mine, a destiny helper, a great daughter of Zion, a friend who sticks closer than a sister , and a seasoned Professional Teacher. She stands tall in everything that she does, an enviable Reputation and Posture. She remains my tested and trusted Sister from another mother.

CONGRATULATIONS, PROF KE NAANĪ M.

Signed: DR LUCY MGBENGASHA APAKAMA.

Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri.

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE

The family of Revd. Daniel and Mrs. Chiamaka Ilechukwu wishes to say welldone to a multinational and an erudite scholar - Evang. Prof. Amb. Mrs. Nkechinyere Nwokoye (JP), on a successful NAU Council election campaign and its attendant victory at last.

It is the best news of the century to hear of your emergence as one of the UNIZIK Senate Council Rep. You are known to have always spoken your mind without mincing words in matters that concern our great university of the moment (UNIZIK) and the esteemed Senators of NAU have respected this.

We promise to offer you our wholehearted and unreserved support in your task ahead as our representative at NAU council and we pray that the Almighty God who chose you will provide all you need to be effective and efficient.

Bravo!!!

Revd. Daniel and Mrs Chiamaka Ilechukwu.

I congratulate you, Prof Nkechinyere Nwokoye on your election as a Senate Representative in the Governing Council of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. You've distinguished yourself in unique ways which have endeared you to people; hence I'm not surprised at your victory. I pray for Divine wisdom and grace to continue the good works in this new capacity.

More wins and big congratulations Prof.

Dr Adaobi Ngozi Okoye

Department of Linguistics

*Nnamdi Azikiwe University,
Awka*

OZIEKELE

Eji m ohere a na-ekele Okankuzi Nkechinyere Anthonia Nwokoye onye e tũnyere ugo isonye na ndị Nlekọta (member Governing Council) nke Mahadum a kpokwasara aha Nnamdi Azikiwe dị n'okwá (Awka).(Unizik). Ekpere m bụ ka Chineeke nye ya amara o ga-eji weta ihe e ji ama atụ n'oge o chichị ha. Ya gazie ezi nwanne m.

Okammụta Helen Chijiago Echebima, (ABSU).

NKE CHI M NYERE M

Igbo kwuru okwu wee sị na Ugo chara acha anaghị echu echu. Ee, otu a ka o di; Ugo chara acha enweghị ochuchu ma o li. Ya mere, onye ube ruuru biko rachawa na chi ya nyere ya. Ugbọ wee buru m buga Oká, o wee buru na mahadum Zik ka ukwu m turu n'ala. Gini ka m ji maka ya wee bia? O wee buru ija Ugo mma n'ihu na a naghị ahụ ya kwa daa. O wee buru onye? Ozi ekele m na-agara Okankuzi Anthonia Nkechinyere Nwokoye: ada ji Igbo eri nri, akpa nganga, azulite uwa site na ndu duga ndu. N'ezio kwu, ihe onye na-eme ka e ji mara ya, onye a na-akpokwanu nweriri ihe o na-eme. Igbo si na aha onye na-edu ya, Nwokoye wee deekwa ya n'ihu akwukwo nke anọ nke akwukwo o ji mee nkuzi nturuugo ya na Mahadum Zik n'abalị iri abuo na abuo nke onwa asato n'afọ 2019 na n'ezio kwu, "Aha onye na-edu ya". Chi gi nyere gi ihe oma, chi gi ji aka ya wee gozie gi. O ji onu wee nochie anya anyammiri niile i begoro na mbu. Ya ka m ji wee si ka m soro wee nye ya ekele ma soro gi nuri n'ihu na ihe oma na-efe efe. Ozi nturuugo gi na ntuliaka e mere na Mahadum Zik maka isonye na otu na-ahụ maka ulokwukwo ahụ rutere m ntị ka onwa ato nke afọ 2021 gbara mkpuru ubochi iri ato na otu.

N'ezio kwu, onu juputara m obi n'ihu na o doro m anya na okwa ahụ ruuru gi tinyekwara na Chi ginonyeere gi wee nye gi mmeri. M wee na-ekele Olisa bi n'igwe maka nturuugo a ma na-ekpere gi ekpere oganihu nakwa akọ nke si na Chukwu. Ogwu agaghị akpo gi, i gaghị akpobi ukwu na nkume, i ga-ejecha wee bata, ma sikwa n'ebe ahụ rigoro wee na-agakwa n'ihu.

O doro m anya na i ga-azuta ihe a turu gi n'ahia. Ihe e ji eziga anwuruokwu ozi n'igwe bu na a maara na ozi e ziri ya erugo Olisa ntị kpomkwem!

Nne m, Chi gi nyere gi, biko golibe.

O bu m,

Nna Ibeabuchi Felix na-ekele.

Ya gazie!

WRITE AN OBITUARY FOR THE AJLR

“In every individual,” wrote Dostoevsky in *From the House of the Dead*, “there is a spark of the Divine.” It should be the aim of every obituary to convey this spark to a reader who has never known the subject. Yet how rarely is this achieved; instead the writer falls back on prolixity, cliché, and a curriculum vitae. There is little idea of this subject's uniqueness, of how things would have been different had he or she never lived. This is not to sneer at obituary writers or at what they produce. They have an exceptionally difficult task, and the reasons for their failure are self-evident. Almost inevitably inexperienced writers confronted with an emotional task and a short deadline, they find that they know the subject far less well than they thought. And almost inevitably they then turn to and follow published obituaries which, instead of conveying uniqueness, have relied on sentiments more appropriate to a 19th century tombstone than to a 20th century journal.

Whether conventional or justified, however, condolences for relatives are best put into a personal letter.¹ Like other features in the journal, the AJLR Obituaries are primarily for readers who want their attention held in the same way as elsewhere and as recent correspondence has confirmed,² read them avidly. Nevertheless, for some time the editor has been faced with a paradox: whereas non obituaries undergo rigorous peer review and have a high rejection rate, until recently obituaries did not, and most of them were published with only shortening. Given the continuing large increase in the number of academics, the inevitable happened, with a heavy back log of accumulated obituaries, some of them relating to language experts who had died several months/years previously.

What is the solution to the problem of the obituaries? To apply the drastic gatekeeper' approach used for the rest of the journal would be cruel and unpopular, yet a modification of this might help in distinguishing obituaries that are justifiably long from the ones that are not.

SHORT NOTICES

Short notices (60-120 words) need the following:

- ❖ Full names of Subject, including any nicknames
- ❖ Principal position/Appointments in Career, with place(s) and dates
- ❖ Date and place of birth
- ❖ Date and place of qualification
- ❖ Date and cause of death
- ❖ Two or three Sentences (On, for example undergraduate Career, Post graduate Career, hobbies, achievements within and outside academics), eschewing phrases to avoid see below
- ❖ Name of Spouse and number of children, grandchildren and great grand children

LONGER NOTICES

Longer notices (200-400 words) need all of the above (though some facts may be inserted into the narrative). They also need a fuller treatment of what made the person's life so special for the outsider that justice cannot be done in a shorter account. Too many writers, however, pad out an account of their subjects life with a banal list of his or her successive appointments, a feature particularly prone to occur for academic, or service officers and infinitely tedious for readers if it supports no thread of an evolving life (what in fiction the Germans would call a *Bildungroman*).

DO's and Don'ts

Obituaries are news, and hence they need not only to be accurate but to be as topical as possible. The following suggestions should help to achieve this:

- ❖ Tell the AJLR that the Subject has died
- ❖ Remember that the notice is exclusive to the AJLR and should not be sent to another journal or newspaper as well (although it is quite acceptable for a different notice to be sent elsewhere)
- ❖ Decide on the type of notice (shorter or longer)

- ❖ Check the facts (dates of birth, graduation and death)
- ❖ Provide all the facts listed above under short notices
- ❖ Provide at least three sentences to highlight the subject's unique contributions (more if a longer notice is being submitted). Friends or relatives, or both, may help with this, but if you find this impossible you are probably not the right person to be writing the account.
- ❖ Check the account with the family or friends or both.
- ❖ Provide a photograph of the subject (preferably with the date it was taken). A passport photograph will not do since it is always disfigured with an official stamp.

was the best in the world: he produced quotations to show that, according to its inhabitants, among many overweening attributes it had the best landscape, the best zoo, the safest airline, the best statue (Eros), the finest judicial system, and the most capable civil service, as well as the best bakers in the world.³ Much the same could be said about obituaries written about doctors. Nobody wants old scores paid off in spiteful, dismissive passages, but equally, a recital of glib stock phrases is just as inadequate. Hence writers should adopt the third possibility: giving the truth about a rounded human being with his or her foibles as well as achievements. All of us would prefer to be remembered in this way not only because it is as we really were but because it is also much more interesting and readable than the conventional honeyed platitudes.

1. Lock, Smith R. Obituaries: the future: BMJ 1915;311:143-4
2. Letters, Obituaries, BMJ 1915;310:660-2
3. Renier GJ. The English; are they human? London: Williams and Norgate, 1931

PHRASES TO AVOID:

Certain phrases occur over and over again in obituaries and, I believe, should be avoided (box).

To be sure

No hobby but his/her work

The most popular general practitioner in Loamshire

The best clinical teacher in Britain

Had all the time in the world for his/her patients

With his/her death truly comes the end of an era

Widely respected for his/her conscientiousness /clinical prowess

Shrewd clinical acumen

Adored/beloved by all his/her staff/patients colleagues.

A person of total integrity

Took on a load that would have daunted/crushed

killed anybody less resolute/tough

We shall not see his/her like again

Did not suffer fools gladly.

The individual case they may be justified: applied universally, however, they are unlikely to be true, if only on statistical ground, while such repetition has a stultifying effect on readers. In a little remembered prewar book a Dutch academic, Professor Georges Renier, devoted a whole chapter to our national conviction that everybody and everything in England

ANAMBRA STATE ENDOWS CHINUA ACHEBE PRIZE FOR NIGERIAN WRITING

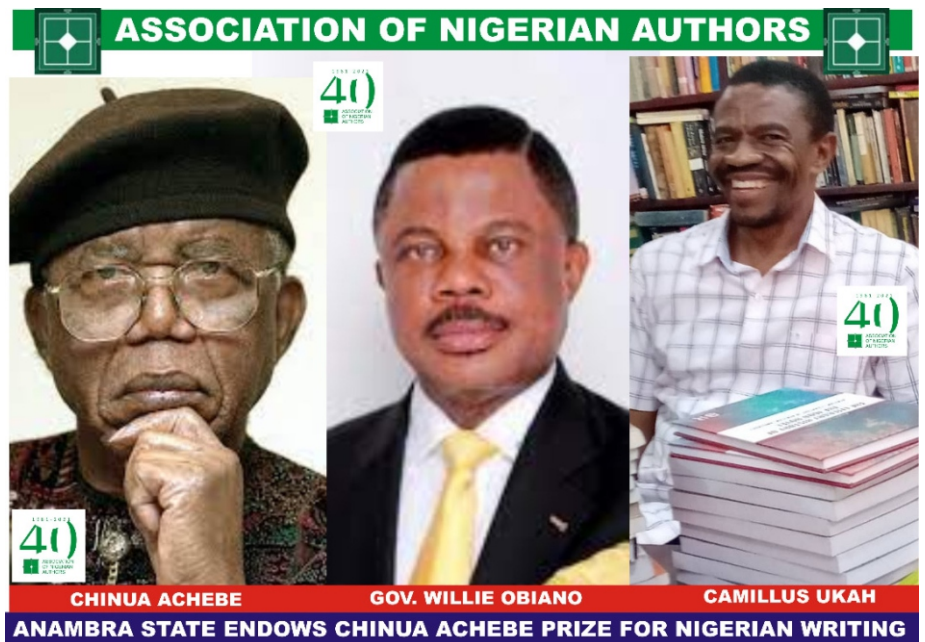
To mark the 40th anniversary of the Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA) which Africa's greatest raconteur and novelist founded at the University of Nigeria at Nsukka, the Anambra State Government has endowed a one-million naira (N1 million) worth Chinua Achebe Prize for Nigerian Writing. The Prize is to be administered by ANA founded in 1981.

The state Commissioner for Information and Public Enlightenment, C. Don Adinuba, made the endowment known in Awka, the Anambra State capital, while speaking to journalists recently.

Mr Adinuba reported Governor Willie Obiano as stressing that Achebe deserves celebration not only in his native Anambra State but also all over Nigeria, Africa and the world as the globally acclaimed "father of African literature".

The Chinua Achebe Prize for Nigerian Writing will be awarded to the best novel published by a Nigerian writer in each calendar year.

The prize will be distinctive from the usually awarded ANA Fiction Prize, ANA Poetry Prize, ANA Drama Prize etc in that it will draw entries from distinguished publishers in Nigeria, Africa and the world.



The Nigerian Diaspora that rates quite high on the literary front will through the Chinua Achebe Prize for Nigerian Writing identify strongly with the home front.

Chinua Achebe blazed a trail in world literature when he published the classic *Things Fall Apart* on June 17, 1958 at barely 27 years of age. The novel has since been translated to well over 60 languages and ignited a boom in African writing. The other novels of Achebe are *No Longer At Ease*, *Arrow of God*, *A Man of the People*, and *Anthills of the Savannah*.

By instituting the Chinua Achebe Prize for Nigerian Writing, the Anambra State Government has written its name in history as the

first state government in Nigeria to honour a writer.

Camillus Ukah, ANA president, has praised Governor Obiano for the honour to Achebe. "In an era of crass philistinism in Nigeria", he declared in a telephone conversation with Commissioner Adinuba this morning, "it is reassuring that there are top government officials like Chief Obiano who appreciate ideas, letters and culture".

Camillus Ukah said that the governor's gesture has galvanised ANA to consider holding a meeting in Awka to mark the association's 40th anniversary as it has already done in some Nigerian cities.



Coming Out Soon!

In a studio in the upper room, a broad sheet of paper spread across a big drawing board and a pen moved across the broad sheet scribbling, sometimes dancing and writing by an invisible hand. When the writing has been done, the paper lifted and spread across the board in the studio to display the beautiful sketch of a project which contained the design of all the planets; all the seas and rivers; all the volcanoes and tsunami's; all the fault lines, earthquakes and hurricanes; all the tombstones of all the dead and the living

from the beginning of time. Maabiko emerged from one of those tombstones to seek restitution for the injustice done to her in her lifetime. The story of that injustice and her fight for restitution runs through the book. The story permits interludes that draw from mysteries buried in the nature of things. In the end, it leaves many questions unanswered. Questions that go on to engage the intellectual study of the theologian father ancestor. Is our world a bottomless pit of things we can never know?

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