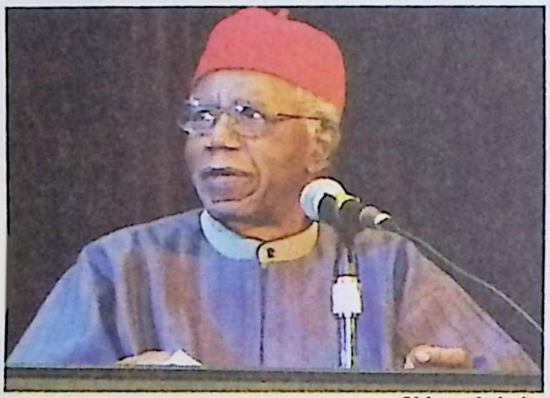
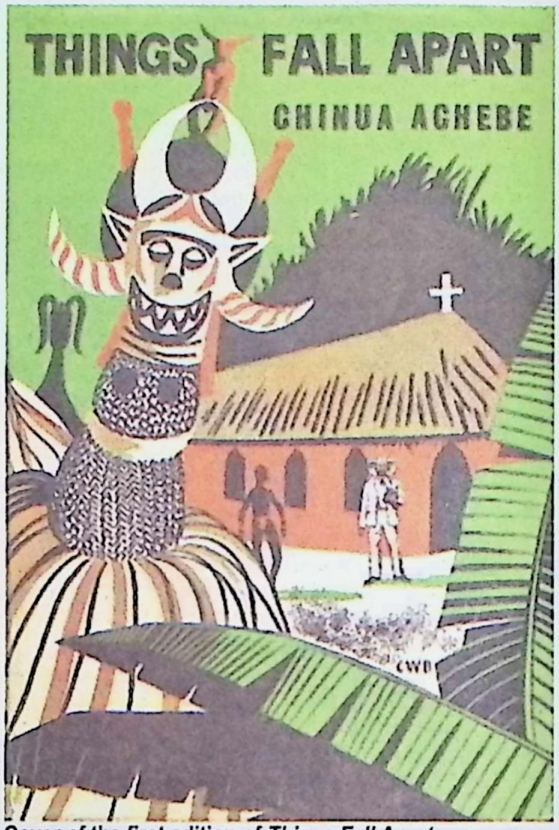
The Father of Modern African Literature

Chinua Achebe (1930-2013) is the Nigerian poet, novelist, professor and one of the greatest personalities of world literature. His books are the most widely read books in modern African literature. Thus he is considered as the father of modern African literature. Through his literary works he raised his voice against racism and discrimination. On his first death anniversary, we remember the contribution of this great writer and humanitarian.



Chinua Achebe



Cover of the first edition of *Things Fall Apart*.

- Chinua Achebe was born as Albert Chinualumogu Achebe in the Igbo village of Ogidi, Nigeria on 16 November 1930
- For his brilliant result Achebe was granted government scholarship to study medicine
- But Achebe switched his field of study to English literature, history, and theology
- He was also the student of Nigeria's first University which was the only university at that time
- In 1950. Achebe wrote his first piece named "Polar Undergraduate" for the "University Herald"

- Oral tradition of Igbo people and their folk tales are the main fabric of Achebe's stories
- In his stories Achebe focused on the revival of local African traditions and culture
- During Nigeria-Biafra war Achebe campaigned for the humanitarian disaster in Biafra caused by the Nigerian military
- After the war. Achebe returned to Nigeria and started to publish two literary magazines to revive Nigerian literature

- Sold over 8 million copies around the world. Achebe's Things Fall Apart (1958) is one of the most important books of African literature
- The book has been translated into 50 languages
- Achebe has become the most translated African writer of all time
- In the book Achebe depicted the cultural conflict between African local community and the imposed colonial culture
- Achebe has used his own experience and background in most of his works

- Besides 10 bestselling novels, Achebe authored many short stories, poems, essays and children's stories
- Most of his works have depicted encounter of African tradition with the imposed European culture
- Achebe has been awarded with numerous awards along with 30 honorary degrees from the universities around the world
- Achebe never received a Nobel Prize, which some observers viewed as unjust
- Achebe, the father of modern African literature, died after a short illness on 21 March 2013 in Boston, United States

– MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN