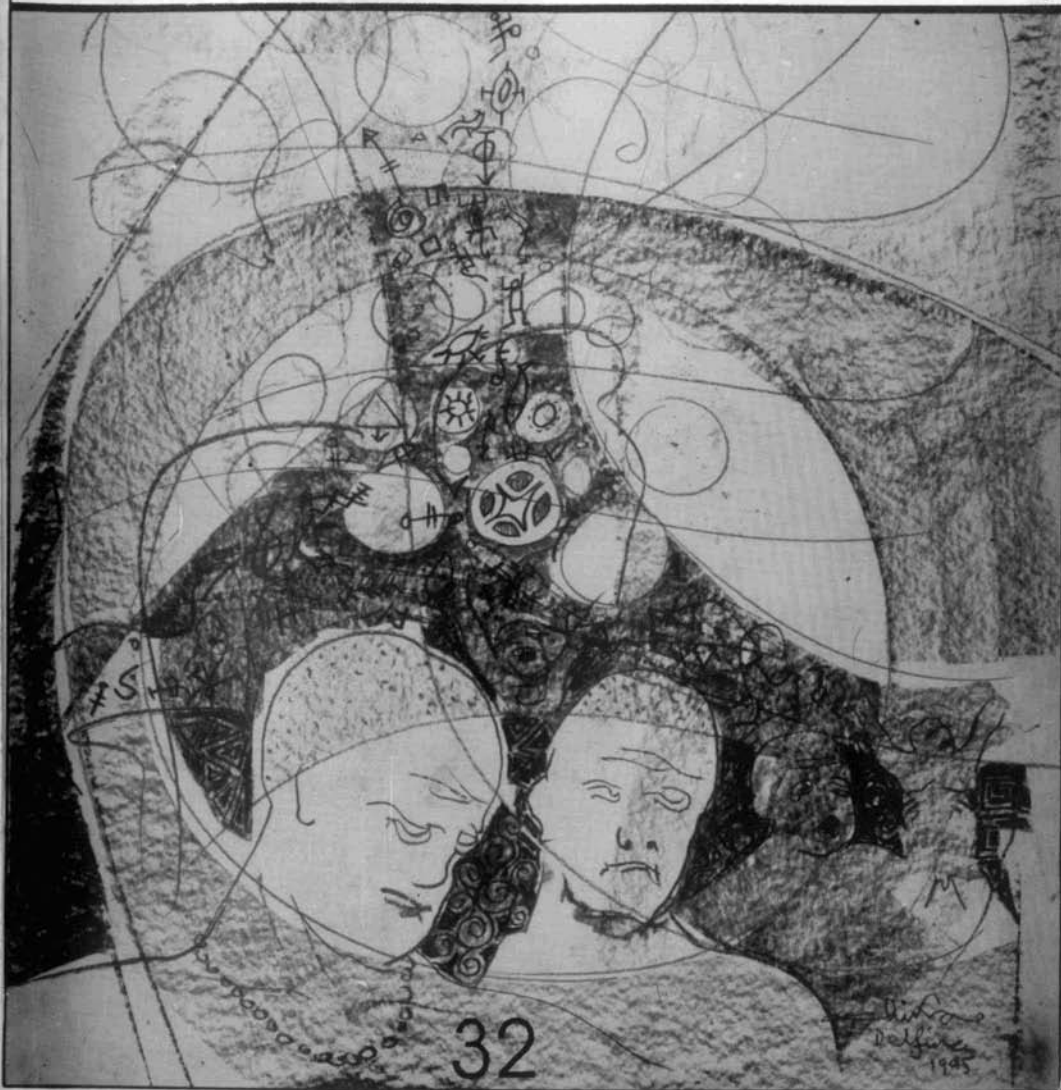




# OKIKE

AN AFRICAN JOURNAL OF NEW WRITING



32

# **OKIKE**

*An African Journal of New Writing*

NUMBER 32, FEBRUARY 1996

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ISSN 0331-0566

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**Acknowledgement:** This publication has been made possible by a grant from the Heinrich Boll Foundation of Cologne, Germany.

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### From the Editor

In this issue, we feature the work of several young poets and fiction writers, who are appearing in print for the first time. This, we are sure, will delight all our readers. This is something to celebrate. We hope that they will grow from strength to strength, which is the goal of *Okike* founders.

Since No. 31, we have been receiving more contributions than ever before which shows that the impact that we hoped for is being felt. However, we do not receive short stories, short plays and reviews as much as we would like.

We are happy to announce that *Okike* will be twenty-five years in 1996 - another cause for celebration. The October 1996 edition will mark our Silver Jubilee. We invite special contributions for this issue. Contributors should remember, in this case, as in all cases, to send biographical notes, together with two copies of their manuscripts. Remember, manuscripts should be in duplicate, typewritten, double-spaced with ample margins.

Have a pleasant year.

Onuora Ossie Enekwe

CHINYELU NZEWI

## Tomorrow In Our Eyes

If you see me

Lying on the tarmac  
Bloodied  
Dyed in red  
Fragmented ankles  
A debris of tissues  
Dismembered heart

If you see our yesterday

Reported in history  
Twisted through tales  
Broken into shreds  
Plastered on faces  
Draped in black

Will you stop and say

Hello?

Will you report

I was there?

Will you make firewood

Of the fallen branches

And sit on the trunk

Of the fallen tree?

What will you do

I beg you,

Be my friend tomorrow.























































































































and secondly, if literature is to be seen as an index of cultural self-definition, then that large crack in historical and thematic continuity surely labels present African effort at cultural regeneration and wholeness as potentially inefficacious.

The purpose of this essay is to examine the nature of the gap, the absent history of slavery and the slave trade in four well-known works by three well-known writers: Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God* (1964); Ama Ata Aidoo, *Anowa* (1970) and Wole Soyinka, *Death and the King's Horseman* (1975).

### III Vision and Revisor

Without question the most successful exponent in African literature today of the colonial experience as a literary theme is that luculent and impeccable stylist, Chinua Achebe. Since he identified that period in African history brought to formal being by the Berlin Conference of 1884 as the point "where the rain began to beat us" (Achebe 1975: 44), Chinua Achebe has gone on to elaborate a monumental literary vision that places at its centre colonialism and its logical corollary, what he calls "the task of re-education and regeneration" (1975: 45).

When Achebe speaks about looking back to "try to rind out where we went wrong" (1975: 4), he means the colonial experience, not the slave history. His first and best-known novel, *Things Fall Apart*, is set among the Igbo of Eastern Nigeria during the last years of the nineteenth century when European colonialism was seeking to entrench itself in Africa. The story is a parable about old and new power. The action of the plot is shadowed by colonial authority, and the crisis of both Okonkwo, the protagonist and strong-man of his day, and his village, Umuofia, is deepened beyond recovery by the overarching propaedeutical escapades of the European colonial administrator and the Christian missionary. The immediate cause of Okonkwo's suicide is the knowledge that his village would not support him against the power of the European colonialist after he beheaded the saucy messenger from the district office:









































































































































































